

Volume XXI, Issue IV.

"The All Types of Computers" Club

July, 2005

We meet at the Simi Valley Public Library, July 14th and July 27th 7:30 pm.

Meetings are for beginners through advanced computer users and are free and open to the public.

For info.email: <mailto:info@svcug.org>, or website: <http://www.svcug.org>.

Thursday, July 14th, 7:30 pm

Q&A by Rod Grimes

Faxing and Windows XP

Presentation by Gordon Huff

<mailto:wa6fmx@worldnet.att.net>

Faxing and Windows XP

Steve Carter and Gordon Huff have been talking about FAX machines; these conversations have been driven by two forces.

First, many folks we must deal with, from real estate agents to sandwich shops, can't deal with computer communication. Some can push one button under duress

Second, the price of the hardware has collapsed - a "four-in-one" computer device commands either no or a mere \$10 premium over a computer printer which is already astoundingly priced. (This weekend OfficeMax offers a Brother (brand) 4-in-1 for \$50 after rebate!) Often a stand alone FAX machine is \$29 or so.

Starting at Jake Ludington's MediaBlab (www.jakeludington.com) I find some leading questions. Does Windows XP have an equivalent to the old FAX application in Windows 95/98? Yes it does. Just like Windows XP supports a basic scanner. Just like Windows XP CD burning built-in but maybe not enabled. Just like Windows XP has a very useful word processor WordPad (remember WindowsWrite?) Jake also talks about free FAXes, and IP FAXes and buying a stand alone FAX machine. I also found a freeware MD5 calculator I like.

Do you have FAX hardware in your computer already? **Start>Control Panel> Phone and Modem Options> Modems> Properties> Diagnostics> Query Modem.** Whew! After a moment, you'll see AT +FAXCLASS=? 0,1,8 which means yes you have FAX support. (The other places where it says FAX are merely humorous asides.)

Continued on page 7

Wednesday, July 27th, 7:30 pm

Q&A by Rod Grimes

Image Editing with Photoshop

Presentation by Marika Panczel

<mailto:marika@ez2.net>

- Techniques to make your images pop
- Convert color photos to create a beautiful tinted image

Refreshments, Raffle, and Special User Group Prices will be offered at the meetings.

For further details of next meeting presentations, check the website <http://www.svcug.org>, or your eMail.

Please, send eMail to info@svcug.org if you haven't been receiving email announcements



A Windows Treatment

By Lincoln Spector

<http://www.pcworld.com/resource/printable/article/0,aid,119266,00.asp>

If Windows stumbles but doesn't fall, your PC likely needs only refurbishing, not a full operating system makeover. In fact, machines with startup problems can usually be repaired without a last-gasp reinstallation.

Cut Back on Autoloads

You may be amazed at just how many programs load automatically at Windows boot-up and then run in the background as you work (not all of them appear as icons in the system tray, either). Each of these programs uses memory and other resources, which might even cause a conflict with another program.

To view your list of autostart apps, select *Start, Run, type msconfig, and press Enter* to open the System Configuration Utility. Click the Startup tab. What are those strange autoloading programs? Find out with the System Configuration Utility. (You may need to widen the Command column to view the entire path.) Uncheck items in this list to keep them from autoloading.

Windows 2000 needs no autoload programs, and Windows XP requires only one—sort of. If you don't use Microsoft Messenger, you may want to uncheck 'msmsgs', but doing so can cause problems with Outlook, Internet Explorer, or other Microsoft programs. Windows 98 and Me have several autoloading applications. In these versions, keep LoadPowerProfile, SystemTray, ScanRegistry, PCHealth, and TaskMonitor selected (including both instances of the first one if it's listed twice, which can occur as part of Windows' boot process). If you use Windows' Task Scheduler, don't uncheck SchedulingAgent (to find out whether a program is using the applet, select *Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, Scheduled Tasks* and see if anything is listed). For Windows Me, keep StateMgr.

Determining whether you need your other autoload apps requires a bit of detective work. You can usually figure out what application put the entry in your startup list by reading the information in the Startup tab's Command column. For instance, if you see that the loading file is located in the Roxio folder, it's a good bet that the entry is a Roxio program. Google can also help ferret out the source of these programs; if you search for the file name, you're bound to find an explanation.

Keep checked any listing related to your firewall or your antivirus program to make sure they're always running in the background. On the other hand, some autoloaders put an icon in the system tray for

launching an application that you could just as easily launch from the Start menu. Having these programs autoload is a waste of resources, so uncheck away.

Sometimes it's a judgment call: If a utility enhances Windows in a way you like, running it at all times could be worthwhile. The four programs recommended in "Longhorn's Features—Now" fall into this "maybe for you" category. But even then, if Windows gives you trouble, consider disabling such a program—at least temporarily—to see whether it's the culprit; life may be better without it.

Unfortunately some unchecked programs have a way of reappearing checked and autoloading, even though you just unchecked them. Why? The application that installed the autoloading program sees what you've done, and responds by "correcting" your mistake. (Older versions of Real Networks' media player are known offenders.) If this happens to you, unchecking the option will just create a cycle of frustration. Instead, launch the application and explore its menus, looking for a "load at startup" option. When you find it, uncheck it.

If you don't find such an option, check the vendor's Web site, or as a last resort call its technical support line. If you discover that there's no way to turn off the autoloader, and you have no good reason to leave it on, ask yourself how badly you want that program on your PC—which brings us to our next section.

Uninstall Unused Apps

A program doesn't have to be running to mess up Windows' performance. Getting rid of all the applications on your PC that you no longer use is a good idea. Doing so isn't always easy, however.

Most programs have their own uninstall routine. Unfortunately, these routines seldom remove everything. All too often installing a program gives you both benefits and problems, and uninstalling it removes only the benefits. I sometimes suspect that software developers write installation routines on the assumption that you bought your computer to run their software exclusively, and they create uninstall routines only because they have to—while reassuring themselves that no one would ever want to use the feature to remove their programming masterpiece.

Nevertheless, the program's own uninstall routine is the best place to start the removal process. You might find a shortcut to the uninstaller on the program's Start menu entry. If not, select *Start, Control Panel, Add or Remove Programs* (in Windows XP) or *Start, Settings, Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs* (in all other Windows versions). Find the program you want on the 'Currently installed programs' list (under the Install/Uninstall tab in Windows 98), click the Add/Remove or Change/Remove button, and follow the prompts.

You haven't really gotten rid of the program yet. Reopen the System Configuration utility to see whether the uninstalled application still autoloading anything; if it does, follow the steps in "Cut Back on Autoloads" above. Next, open Windows Explorer and delete the program's folder inside the C:\Program Files directory (if it's still there). And if a shortcut to the program is still on the Start menu, right-click the item and then select Delete.

To reassign any file associations that the uninstalled program may have claimed, open *Windows Explorer*, select *Tools, Folder Options* (View, Folder Options in Windows 98), and click the *File Types* tab and then the File Types header under 'Registered file types' to sort the list of file types by program (this header isn't available in Windows 98). Check the list for any extensions associated with the uninstalled program. If you find one, click Change and select a new program to open that file type. For example, if you uninstall an image editor, you can reassociate .bmp files with Windows' own Paint utility. Or click Delete to make .bmp an unassociated file type. Then you'll be prompted for which program to use each time you attempt to open a file of this type.

You'll also want to clean the program out of the Windows Registry. (See "Pare the Registry" below for instructions.)

Ferret Out Spyware

You need to scan your system for spyware regularly, but it's especially important to do so when Windows behaves oddly (well, more oddly than usual).

No anti-spyware program I've used finds all the miscreants, so you should run more than one scanner. Fortunately, two of the best are free: *Lavasoft's Ad-Aware* and *Patrick M. Kolla's Spybot Search & Destroy*. Go to <http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/collection/0,collid,1347,00.asp> to download these and other popular (and free) spyware catchers. Get the latest updates for the programs after you install them and before you scan your system.

SpywareGuide (www.spywareguide.com), provides valuable information on malicious software from a database covering more than 800 known spyware programs. Read Steve Bass's tips on finding—and blocking—spyware.

Update Your Drivers

Conventional wisdom urges us to frequently update our drivers—the programs that tell Windows what to do with hardware. Of course, conventional wisdom once held that the world is flat.

If your PC is running well, there's no reason to update your drivers. But if you're having trouble, a driver update might help. First, open Windows' *Device Manager* by right-clicking *My Computer* and selecting *Properties*. In Windows XP and 2000, click Hardware, Device Manager. In Windows 98 or Me, click Device Manager.

Look for *entries with yellow question marks or red exclamation points*: The question mark indicates that Windows is using a generic driver for that device instead of one designed for it, and an exclamation point means that the device is not working. The drivers for graphics boards, sound cards, and printers are most likely to need an update. Drivers under 'Computer', 'Disk drives', 'Floppy disk drives', and 'Keyboards' rarely require updating.

To update a driver, double-click the component listing and choose Driver, Update Driver in the product's Properties dialog box. The Hardware Update Wizard will search for an updated driver on your local drives as well as on Microsoft's Windows Update site, and it will install the driver if it finds one.

Even if the wizard doesn't find one, a driver update may be avail-

able. Search for a new version on the vendor's Web site, or enter the full product name plus the word driver in a search engine. When you find an update, make sure it works with your version of Windows. Either the new driver will install automatically after you download and run it or it will provide you with installation instructions.

Updating a driver could make things worse, however. In Windows XP, click Roll Back Driver under the Driver tab in the Properties dialog box to return to the previous version. If you regret updating a driver in 98, Me, or 2000, your only option is to replace it with a generic driver (at least until the vendor releases a bug fix).

Pare the Registry

There's no bigger rat's nest on a well-used Windows system than the Registry. Whenever you install software, change hardware, or download something from the Web, you pour gunk into this vast, loosely constructed database that Windows relies on to work properly. Cleaning it out can make a world of difference in Windows' performance. *Before you start, make sure you can restore the Registry to its previous state* should you delete the wrong key. Windows 98, Me, and XP (but not 2000) back up the Registry automatically, but it doesn't hurt to make an extra backup before doing something that could hose your PC. With your personal data, it makes sense to store the backup at another location, but that's not the case with the Registry backup. If your hard drive goes bad, it's pointless to restore this Registry backup in another Windows setup.

In Windows XP and Me, you can use *System Restore to back up the Registry*. Select Start, All Programs (Programs in Me), Accessories, System Tools, System Restore, Create a restore point, and then follow the prompts. To back up the Windows 98 Registry, select Start, Run, type scanreg, and press Enter. When you see no more errors, click Yes and then OK.

Windows 2000 offers no reliable way to back up your Registry, so you have to use third-party software. I recommend Lars Hederer's free Emergency Recovery Utility NT (ERUNT).

There are easier (and safer) *Registry-cleaning tools* than Windows' own Registry Editor. One is ChemTable Software's \$30 Reg Organizer, which gives you a conventional Registry editor (prettier than Microsoft's), as well as a tabbed view of Registry keys that often need cleaning (such as File Types and Startup Processes). You can even create a list of favorite Registry items and return to them with a single click (although a list of Registry keys that you must return to repeatedly would more appropriately be called "least favorite").

Reg Organizer's Registry Cleanup tool searches for problems and presents its findings. It can, at your discretion, repair some of the errors it finds and delete entries that it can't repair. And here's another cool Reg Organizer feature: If you've just uninstalled a program, click the utility's Search and Replace icon to finish the job. Here you can delete all listings containing the removed program's name (or the name of its vendor).

If you're brave enough to clean out the Registry with Windows' own Registry Editor, read "*Care and Feeding of the Windows Registry*," Stan Miastkowski's May 2002 Step-By-Step column, for instructions. ❖

Latest News

Friday, July 08, 2005

<http://www.pcworld.com>

- IBM Extends PowerPC with Dual-Core, Low-Power Chips
- New chips possible for last hurrah in Apple products.

IBM unveiled two new PowerPC chips at an event in Tokyo this week, one month after its primary customer for those chips announced plans to switch to Intel's processors.

The new PowerPC 970MP is a dual-core version of the PowerPC 970FX, which users of Apple Computer's Power Mac and iMac computers know as the G5 processor. IBM also unveiled a low-power version of the 970FX chip with power consumption statistics that would make it suitable for a notebook.

IBM had said little publicly about its PowerPC road map during the last several weeks of speculation, then confirmation, that Apple would make the historic switch away from the PowerPC architecture in favor of Intel's x86 architecture starting in 2006. IBM and Apple have had a rocky partnership since IBM became the exclusive supplier of the G5 processors. Manufacturing problems at IBM caused a delay in shipments of the G5 chips last year, and power-consumption issues forced Apple to use liquid cooling in a high-end Power Mac and hold back on launching a G5 PowerBook or iBook.

In fact, Apple Chief Executive Officer Steve Jobs cited concern about IBM's long-term road map for high-performance processors with low power consumption when announcing the switch to Intel's chips last month. However, he also said that Apple planned to release new PowerPC-based Macs between now and the time the switch gets under way next year. Apple won't switch its entire lineup of Macs to Intel until 2007.

An Apple spokesperson declined to comment on the company's plans for the

new PowerPC chips.

Tom Krazit, IDG News Service

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- Microsoft Readies Disk-Based Recovery System
- Software giant will release its data backup and recovery system later this year.

Microsoft's System Center Data Protection Manager (DPM) will be ready for prime time in the third quarter, the vendor announced today.

Microsoft has completed production of its disk-based data backup and recovery system and will release the product to manufacturing in the next 30 days, says Ben Matheson, group product manager for DPM at Microsoft. The vendor also has set the pricing for the product at \$950 for one DPM server and the ability to protect three other file servers.

Microsoft will highlight DPM's impending release at its annual Worldwide Partner Conference, which kicks off Friday in Minneapolis. The server, which can handle nearly continuous disk-based backup of files running in a Windows Server environment, should be available to customers and partners between 60 and 90 days after the product's release-to-manufacturing date, Matheson says.

Also at the conference, Microsoft will reveal that it is integrating DPM within its Advanced Infrastructure competency in the Microsoft Partner Program. This means that partners will have access to training, certification, and marketing resources around the product so they can begin offering it to their customers.

Microsoft revamped its partner program about a year ago to focus on a series of competencies around which partners can get specific information and develop skills, Matheson says.

Elizabeth Montalbano,

IDG News Service

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Man Arrested for Accessing Wi-Fi Network

Florida man is charged with a felony after allegedly using someone else's home Wi-Fi network.

A man who allegedly accessed a home Wi-Fi network in St. Petersburg, Florida, from a parked car got logged off the hard way: He was arrested and charged with a felony.

Benjamin Smith III, 40, was arrested on April 21 outside the St. Petersburg home of Richard Dinon and charged under a Florida law that prohibits unauthorized access to a computer or network, says George Kajtsa, the police department's public information officer. A pre-trial hearing in the case is scheduled for Monday, according to the state attorney's office for Pasco and Pinellas counties.

Dinon saw Smith sitting in a parked sport-utility vehicle in front of his house and wondered what he was doing there, then saw he was using a notebook computer, Kajtsa says.

"What made him suspicious was, every time he looked toward the car, the guy closed the lid on his laptop," Kajtsa says. Dinon called police. When they came to the scene and approached the vehicle, Smith closed the computer again. The police asked him what he was doing and he finally owned up to it, Kajtsa says. Smith was arrested and the PC seized and sent to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement as potential evidence.

Dinon was worried that Smith might be doing something illegal or inappropriate, Kajtsa says.

"What he was concerned about was not so much that the guy was accessing his [network], what he was concerned about was what he was accessing," Kajtsa says. Dinon was afraid he might be linked to whatever Smith was doing because it was his LAN being used, he says. "This guy did not want himself to be identified as accessing porn sites or child pornography."

Little-Used Law

The state law under which Smith was charged prohibits accessing a computer or network knowingly, willfully, and without authorization. Kajtsa says it's the first time anyone has been arrested in St. Petersburg for using someone else's Wi-Fi.

"This is a very little-used statute,"

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Security Software Leakier Than Windows

Matthew Broersma,
Techworld.com

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

[http://www.pcworld.com/resource/
printable/article/0,aid,121528,00.asp](http://www.pcworld.com/resource/printable/article/0,aid,121528,00.asp)

LONDON — Security software is becoming as riddled with holes as some of the products it is supposed to protect, according to new figures from the Yankee Group. The number of vulnerabilities found in security applications has risen sharply for the third year in a row and now outnumbers those identi-

fied in all Microsoft products, according to the research firm.

In 2004, researchers uncovered 60 vulnerabilities in security software, up from 31 in 2003, according to the study. In May of this year, researchers had already turned up 23 security bugs, compared with 22 bugs in Microsoft applications. The figures through May 2005 are up 50 percent over the same period last year, Yankee Group said. The figures were reported by Business Week. You can read the report here.

Yankee Group's findings confirm a

trend that has become increasingly visible in recent months, as vulnerability researchers and malicious attackers put more effort into finding cracks in the programs intended to protect systems. As Microsoft has discovered in the past few years, the more companies rely on your products, the likelier you are to be attacked.

Most Popular, Most Buggy

This fact partly accounts for the increase in scrutiny of security software, with the largest vendors encountering the greatest number of bugs, according to Yankee Group. Market leader Symantec had the greatest number of reported bugs last year—16—though only 2 more have surfaced this year so far. The number of vulnerabilities surfacing in security programs rose at a higher rate than the number of vulnerabilities in the software industry generally, according to Yankee Group.

Several major antivirus companies—including Symantec, McAfee, Trend Micro, and F-Secure—have had to patch serious security flaws in their core products in recent months.

In March, attackers released exploit code for a bug in Computer Associates security software, just two days after CA released a patch for the problem. CA was hit with a separate bug in May. In December, Microsoft disclosed a vulnerability in its firewall software.

Continued from page 4

Kajtsa says.

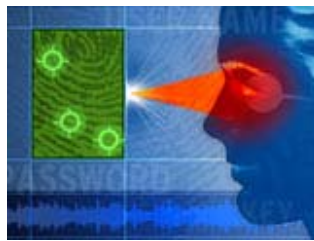
Gartner analyst Ken Dulaney has no sympathy for Wi-Fi users such as Dinon.

“He should have put security on his wireless LAN system. It’s the guy’s fault that he left it open,” Dulaney says. “Don’t the police have anything better to do?”

Open wireless LANs are still common in many residential areas even though Wi-Fi routers can be set not to broadcast their names and tools for encryption have improved since the early days of the technology. Dulaney estimated that half of all wireless LANs are completely open to unauthorized users.

Stephen Lawson, IDG News Service

What's ahead in ID technology



Dan Tynan

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Yes, we know, you're one in a million. But you're much more unique than that, in ways you've probably never imagined. Here are some of the more unusual biometric methods now being explored.

Gait: Do you walk it like you talk it? Gait biometrics measure the motion of your legs as you move. The technology's big advantage is that a good scanner can recognize you at a distance using low-resolution images (like those from a parking-lot security camera).

Ears: Whether you've got ears like Minnie Mouse or like Dumbo's, their pattern is unique and doesn't change over time. Ear prints are being used in Great Britain to solve crimes.

Keystrokes: The rhythm and speed of your typing can be a reliable indicator of who's on the other side of the keyboard. Keystroke dynamics can be used to control access to a computer network or for online authentication.

Signature: This biometric can measure not only what your John Hancock looks like, but also the changes in pressure and velocity as you move the pen,

making it much harder for forgers to spoof. But because your signature can change with age and health, it's not a reliable long-term solution.

Vein structure: Using infrared light, this biometric measures the unique pattern of veins in the face, hand, or wrist. The method's main attractions are ease of scanning and consistency, since such patterns don't change over time.

Hand geometry: This biometric measures the length and width of your fingers, the thickness of your palm, and 90-odd other characteristics of your hand. It's a popular biometric for workplaces, since the scan is fast and noninvasive.

Body odor: Taken a bath lately? No matter. This biometric measures the unique chemicals your body gives off, and can theoretically pick you out of a crowd no matter how much cologne you're wearing. The Department of Defense is investing millions into researching whether such sensors are feasible.

[http://www.pcworld.com/resource/
printable/article/0,aid,120892,00.asp](http://www.pcworld.com/resource/printable/article/0,aid,120892,00.asp)

In my element

Tom Gorham, PC World

[http://www.pcworld.idg.com.au/](http://www.pcworld.idg.com.au/pp.php?id=818481898&fp=2&fpid=37)

[pp.php?id=818481898&fp=2&fpid=37](http://www.pcworld.idg.com.au/pp.php?id=818481898&fp=2&fpid=37)

Even before its recent update, there was no disputing that Photoshop Elements was one of the best budget-priced image editors around. Version 3.0 is a great upgrade that has rightly drawn plaudits. Most praise has centred on the program's updated image-editing features, now getting surprisingly close to matching those of the full version of Photoshop (prior to the launch of Creative Suite 2, of course - see First Looks, May, p22); the only key feature missing is CMYK support.

New tools such as the Healing Brush, which removes flaws by smart-sampling surrounding areas, the addition of adjustment layers, and support for 16-bit images and RAW files, are worth anybody's upgrade fee.

But what sells the program to me is the incorporation of *Photoshop Album*, Adobe's standalone image cataloguing and organising software. Elements now has two parts - Editor and Organizer - which you can switch between easily, if not as quickly as I'd like.

Made in heaven

The marriage of these programs has brought unexpected benefits, particularly to Elements' new photo-sharing abilities. They mix features culled from Elements 2.0, such as PDF slideshows and Web photo galleries, with those that previously only appeared in the paid-for version of Album, such as "photobooks".

All these options are accessed through a single Create button in Editor or Organizer views; from here, you can build slideshows, photo albums, wall calendars and Web-based galleries in the same, consistent way.

Elements has two show modes. A simple slideshow option to export shows to PDF will be familiar to existing Album and Elements users, but it's the much-enhanced Custom Slideshow tool that I've spent the last few weeks playing with. The custom slideshow is wonderfully intuitive. You add photos from your catalogue to a

storyboard, and incorporate text, transitions and background audio. Completed shows can be exported either as Windows .wmv files to your hard disk, or burned directly onto VideoCD. Multiple slideshows can be added to a VideoCD project and then played back on a standard DVD player - assuming that it supports VideoCD playback (most do).

Wipe out

Elements at least makes it easy to create decent-looking multimedia. You can apply a wide range of transitions - such as insets, radial wipes and pixellate - between each slide and you can apply the same effect to all slides in one stroke by selecting Apply to All from the contextual menu. An even more impressive touch is the ability to adjust slide playback to match the background audio, which automatically adjusts the time each slide is displayed so the show fits the background audio track exactly.

Although not immediately obvious, you can add multiple background songs to a slideshow, simply by selecting multiple .mp3 or .wav tracks from source folders. These are then added to the audio track in Elements' storyboard.

If you only want part of an audio track in your slideshow, you can also edit the songs by double-clicking the audio track in the storyboard and in the resulting dialogue box, you can individually adjust their start and duration as well as their volume.

Navigating to the right point in a track is more fiddly than it should be - there's none of the timeline-based editing you would find in a video-editing program (which is how I got away with covering this subject here, rather than having to hand this column over to our resident video guy), but the Play button in the dialogue box at least allows you to get a taste of the audio as it will play during the slideshow - and you can even insert silence between tracks.

Sets and stacks

It's the obvious benefit of digital photography: as you don't pay film or development costs, you can take as many photos as you want. But inevitably, in the search for the best shot, you clog up your photo management software with dozens of near-identical images you can't bear to

choose between.

To add to the bloat, those asset management applications that let you edit your images tend to save a copy of the original for you, just in case. The result can be a huge image database.

Elements 3.0 marks the first attempt I've seen to combat photo bloat and it's fairly successful, if not perfect. Aside from a basic new "compare photo" feature that lets you choose your favourite version of a photo by viewing two versions side-by-side, I've been drawn to two other new, but hardly trumpeted, features.

The first is *version sets*. If you edit a photo inside the program, the Elements Organizer (sic) keeps the original and edited versions together in a single stack, so you only ever see a single thumbnail preview when you browse the database. You can, of course, expand this stack and view both edited and original images individually.

Pile 'em high

A related feature is stacks, which help keep track of associated photos. With stacking, you choose which photos to keep together manually. As with version sets, stacks appear in the photo browser window viewer as a single image, with a small icon that looks like a pile of documents, in the top-right corner. Stacks are flexible: although only the top photo in a stack is visible in the browser, you can choose which photo should take this spot and easily add and remove other photos. But there are some fundamental drawbacks too.

Firstly, you can't name stacks, so you have to rely on Elements' admittedly excellent tagging system to remember a stack's contents. Secondly, stacks aren't intuitive. I found that if you drag a stack from the photo browser window onto the desktop, only the top picture in the stack moves. Equally, while you can do basic photo editing - such as rotating and smart-fixing photos - in the browser window, when you apply such changes to a stack, they only affect the top photo.

But still, it's not bad for a first effort. And it's such a good idea in principle that all media management software should look hard at it.

Out with the old phone, in with the cash

By Rachel Metz
The New York Times
July 7, 2005,

Seth Heine knows what you are doing with those old cell phones, and he is not happy about it.

They may be in your desk drawer, your glove compartment, in pieces on your child's bedroom floor. Perhaps you donate them to charity or simply throw them in the garbage.

Whatever their fate, if you do not send them to Heine's company's site--RipMobile.com--or to a similar site, you could be missing a chance to get cash or goods for phones that are useless to you, but possibly useful to others.

But why bother gathering them and shipping them out?

"The best rationale would be it's easy, it's free and it helps the environment," said Heine, who is chief executive of CollectiveGood, the cell phone recycling company that also runs RipMobile.

RipMobile is one of many companies willing to pay in cash or merchandise for old cell phones. Prices vary depending on the phone's continued utility and the demand for it; some can be worth \$100 or more.

Popular Motorola and Nokia phones will typically are worth \$2 to \$20; the hottest models, like Motorola's Moto Razr V3, seem to fetch the most. Instead of dollars, RipMobile gives points that can be converted to gift certificates at Circuit City, MSN Music, KarmaLoop (for clothing) and RingToneJukeBox.com (ring tones, games and screen savers for cell phones).

Though cell phone manufacturers and wireless companies may offer buy-back or recycling options, sites like RipMobile offer customers a chance to shop around, deciding the easiest and most lucrative way to profit from their old phones.

At sites like CellforCash.com and OldCellPhone.com, customers can look up their phones by brand and model. After registering, they receive a prepaid shipping label and sometimes a box, so

they can pack up and send in their old phones with as little trouble as possible.

Many of the sites take all phones--including clunky, brick-shaped dinosaurs--and simply recycle those that cannot be reused. Phones taken in that still have value are tested, outfitted with any needed accessories and then sold to dealers who resell them as refurbished phones in the United States or abroad. Some phones are donated to charities for use as emergency phones.

Even if cell phones sent in are not worth reselling, precious metals like gold from their circuit boards can be extracted and reused, said Rob Newton, president of OldCell phone.

And by keeping used phones out of landfills, these potential money-making opportunities can also help the environment.

"It's very important to remember that although each phone is small, they're really a bundle of highly toxic materials," because they include chemicals like arsenic, nickel, zinc and lead, said Joanna D. Underwood, president of Inform, a national environmental research organization.

Several companies said they received thousands of phones a month.

"We've had some people send in a couple hundred dollars' worth of phones,"

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Window XP Fax

The Windows XP FAX application is not in the base install of Windows XP. The FAX application transmits documents via modem. To install the Windows XP FAX utility, **Control Panel > Add/Remove Programs>Add/Remove Windows Components>Fax Services** and click **Next**. You'll need your Windows XP CD unless you have a system restore logical drive. The fax app is located in **All Programs > Accessories > Communications > Fax**. You need to configure it.

IP Fax Solutions

eFax remains the most widely acces-

Heine said. "I have no doubt that Mom and Dad and the kids are techies, and somebody just drained the drawer and cashed them in."

Some of the sites--like PhoneFund.com of San Rafael, Calif.--also market themselves as possible fundraising machines for groups ranging from school bands to families trying to get money to adopt a child.

While the prices that Phonefund offers for used phones are not as high as other companies--\$1 to \$6 a phone--it pays for every phone sent in, said the company's director, Michelle Shelfer, also chief financial officer of Red Dot Company, the electronics importer and wholesale distributor that runs the site.

Russ Korins, 33, a New Yorker who is a management consultant for small companies, has used OldCell phone and CellForCash with success.

A professed gadget hound, Korins often gets new cell phones, so in the past year he has traded in three old phones--a Motorola V60 and V600 and a Siemens S46--for a total of \$134. "To get \$30 for something that would otherwise be sitting around or thrown in the garbage is fine," he said.

http://news.com.com/Out+with+the+old+phone%2C+in+with+the+cash/2100-1041_3-5777910.html?tag=nefd.ac

sible free IP fax solution which drops the fax files in your inbox in the proprietary eFax format. You are limited to receiving 20 fax pages per month and a number assigned by eFax (which might mean your number is not local to the city you live in). They offer a premium fax service too.

Faxaway is another IP based fax service similar to eFax. They charge \$0.11 per minute with a \$1 monthly fee.

Standalone Fax Machines

Jake says "In terms of the type of fax machine I recommend, I'm a cheap-skate."

(Gordon Huff is a speaker at the Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley Computer User Groups.)

Local Computer User Groups

Appleholics Anonymous

Chuck Baca 805-650-7503 / Tony Pizza 805-482-3453
2nd Sat 9:30 am 3169 Telegraph Road. Ventura

Conejo Valley Genealogical Society

Albert Richardson, Chairman (NEW)
(805) 492-2029
<mailto:bf140@gte.net>

CVMUG (Mac club)

Susie Herrera 805-484-2259

<mailto:sherrera@vcnet.com>

General Meetings are: *1st Thursday* of each month
at the Cowan Conference Center, Camarillo Airport,
550 Airport Way at 7 p.m.

1st Wednesday of each month

at the Meadows Elementary School in Thousand Oaks,
2000 La Granada at 7 p.m.

Our *novice group* meets during the school year on the
2nd Tuesday of each month at Monte Vista Middle
School, 888 Lantana, Camarillo at 7 p.m. In the library.

Our *intermediate group* meets the 4th Monday of the
month at 7 p.m. During the school year - it's at Monte
Vista in the library. During the summer, (June, July and
August) we meet at the Cowan Conference Center.

Commodore 64/128 Users

Rolf Miller: 805-643-6666

General Meetings: 1st Sat., 10 am

Cal Fed Bank, 430 Arneill Road, Camarillo

Tech Meeting: 2nd Sat, 10 am

Boys-Girls Club, 126 E. 7th Street, Oxnard

Channel Islands PC Group

David Harris - President; [.president@cipcug.org](mailto:president@cipcug.org)

Website: <http://www.cipcug.org>

Meetings on the fourth Saturday Morning of the month,
from 9:30 AM to Noon, at the Camarillo Boys and Girls
Club. There are occasional times when the fourth
Saturday is not available and the Index page for CIPCUG
has six months dates posted for your quick reference. The
address is 1500 Temple Ave. in Camarillo. (Southeast
corner of Ponderosa Dr. and Temple Ave.)

Gold Coast CUE of Ventura County

Tim Rainville, 805-525-3873

Days vary, 4 pm Camarillo area or local school

<mailto:rainvilt@vcss.k12.ca.us>

Leisure Village Club

Neil Iven, 805-383-0016

<mailto:lniven1@juno.com>

1st Friday, 10am Camarillo /

1st Monday, MAC group

2nd Friday, Communications

3rd Wednesday, Novice

Simi Conejo Linux User Group

Website: <http://sclug.org>

Meets every other Saturday at 3 pm

InstallFests start at 2 p.m Simi Valley YMCA

[mailto: sclug@sclug.org](mailto:sclug@sclug.org).

MacValley Users Group

Daphne Gruberman (818) 998-7025

1st Wednesday

Wilkinson Senior Center

8956 Vanalden Street, Northridge

Simi Valley Computer User Group

Barbara Cott 805-2181-0909

<mailto:barbaracott@dslextreme.com>

Website: <http://www.svcug.org>

Main meeting: 2nd Thurs 7:30 pm

Hardware/Software Meeting: 4th Wed, 7:30 pm

Simi Valley Library

Thousand Oaks

Personal Computer Club

Karen Warren - President president@topcc.org

805-497-9612

Website:<http://topcc.org>

4th Thurs: 6:30pm Jan-Oct

3rd Thurs: 6:30 Nov-Dec

Goebbel Sr Ctr or T.O. Library

TUGNET

Website: <http://www.tugnet.org>

meets every Tues, 7pm

Granada Pavilion

11128 Balboa, Granada Hills.

Ventura Beginners PC Users' Group

Howard Wilson 805-647-0360

3rd Sat, 10 am

Club House

BenaVentura Mobile Home Estate, 11407

Darling Road

Need Help?

Dennis Atherton

hardware - Windows 9X, ME, NT, 2K, XP
Networks - home and business
<mailto:datherton@affinitygroup.com>

Steve Carter

OS/2 - <mailto:scarter@vcnet.com> 805-598-8455 til 9pm

Barbara Cott

desktop publishing, Excel, Photoshop, web pages
<mailto:barbara@dslextreme.com> 805-581-2495

Howard Engel

Word 6, programming in PASCAL or ADA
<mailto:engelh@adelphia.com> 805-523-7602 9 am - 10 pm

Gordon Huff

modems, Telix, FDISK
<mailto:wa6fmx@worldnet.att.net> 805-499-3494

Mike Portanova

Recording off the internet, Photo retouching
- <mailto:NOVANIKON@aol.com>

Gaylord Trubey

DOS internet, WIN 3.x, WIN 95, software hardware
<mailto:gaylordt@juno.com> 805-526-2077

Dick Uhlman

Most DOS operations; Windows operations v3.0 to XP Most utilities, for DOS & Windows;
WinWord and Excel, most versions. Internet access and searching; Hardware upgrades
<mailto:duhlman@sbcglobal.net>
805-583-2174 & 805-583-2804 5pm - 8pm

Karleen Volz

BASIC questions, DOS WIN 3.11, WIN 95 WIN NT, basic hardware questions
<mailto:kvolz@juno.com> 7pm - 9:30pm & weekends

Open letter to Simi Valley Computer User Group members

Dear members!

Our Newsletter is an open forum for you to voice your opinion, experience and knowledge. This letter is a reminder to take advantage of this opportunity and become a contributing writer on subjects like:

- reviews on hardware, software and books
- tips and techniques you would like to share
- computer related personal experience
- Questions & Answers

Please, send your writings (about 300 words or less) to the editorial office marika@ez2.net by the 10th of each month to be appearing in the next month's issue. Thank you,

Marika Panczel, *Newsletter editor*

Simi Valley Computer User Group

is a non-profit special interest group for the benefit of anyone interested in learning more about computers and how to use them. Meetings are held twice a month. The General Meeting meets at **7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month**, the Hardware / Software Meeting is held at the same time on the **fourth Wednesday of each month**. The meetings are held at the **Simi Valley Public Library**, in the Community Room.

If you need further **information** about the meetings, call Barbara Cott at 805-218-0909, <mailto:barbaracott@dslextreme.com>. Further information can be found at <http://www.svcug.org> or send email to: <mailto:info@svcug.org>. Visitors are welcome to come and see what our group is all about without obligation to join. However, if you find our meetings to be beneficial to you, we hope you will join and support our group. Dues are \$24 per year or \$13 for 6 months.

It has to say this: Simi Valley Computer User Group (SVCUG), consisting of its officers and membership, is not affiliated with any computer hardware or software manufacturers. Articles contained in this publication may not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of SVCUG. SVCUG makes no warranty of the suitability or inability to use any product or service.



Membership Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

\$13.00 for 6 months \$24.00 for 1 year

Make checks payable to "SVCUG".

Mail to:

Mike Portanova, PO Box 472 AGOURA, CA 91301

or

Bring to: a meeting



User Group Officers

President	Barbara Cott	mailto:barbara@dslextrreme.com
Vice President	Howard Engel	mailto:engelh@adelphia.com
Treasurer	Mike Portanova	mailto:novanikon@aol.com
Secretary	Marika Panczel	mailto:marika@ez2.net

Simi Valley Computer User Group

2718 Kadota Street

Simi Valley, CA 93063

July Meetings

Thursday, July 14th

Q&A by Rod Grimes

Faxing and Windows XP

Presentation by Gordon Huff

<mailto:wa6fmx@worldnet.att.net>

Wednesday, July 27th

Q&A by Rod Grimes

Image Editing with Photoshop

Presentation by

Marika Panczel

<mailto:marika@ez2.net>