Sixteen Bits March 2006

PC Users Group (ACT) Inc
27 Mulley Street
Holder ACT 2611

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LATE NEWS

David Gill has undertaken to present training courses for the PCUG, and his first workshop will be
Sunday 26 March from 1030 to 1230
His topic will be '*Welcome to **Microsoft Word** - bring your frustrations along. . .*'
The course will be limited to **10 members** and will cost $5
Please make your bookings and payments through the **Office Manager**
For further enquiries contact our Training Coordinator, **Joseph Tandl**

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We hope you enjoy this edition of *Sixteen Bits*. We are always on the lookout for items for the next edition. If you have anything to contribute - please send it to **pcug.editor@pcug.org.au**. The nominal cut-off date for submissions is the 15th of each month. All submissions gratefully received. Please send us feedback as to what you might like to see published in your magazine.

For more news of ***events to come*** - don't forget to check the **PCUG** *Calendar* at: **http://www.pcug.org.au/members/calendar/**

Ctrl-A to Select All in current window.

Main Monthly Meeting

PC USERS GROUP (ACT)

April 2006 MONTHLY MEETING

The next Main Monthly Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 4th April 2006** commencing at 7:30 pm in the **Manning Clark Centre, (facility 26A), Lecture Theatre 3, Australian National University, Acton.** Visit the PCUG website **http://www.pcug.org.au/activities/mmm.htm** for a map of the Manning Clark Centre.

 Paul Koerbin, from the Digital Archiving Branch, National Library of Australia, will discuss the "Pandora Archive". Pandora derives from "Preserving and Accessing Networked DOcumentary Resources of Australia", and is an initiative of the NLA to preserve significant Australian web sites and web-based online publications.

The monthly meetings are free. Members, friends and the public are invited to attend. Don't rush home after the meeting! Stay for coffee, tea, biscuits and good company. It's all free! Renew acquaintances, meet new people and ask those questions you didn't get a chance to ask at the meeting! Membership inquiries and renewals are welcomed too!

Email inquiries to **pcug.mmm@pcug.org.au** or phone 02-6287-2922.

The big news for PCUG members this month is, as announced in my email to members on 6 March, the Australia wide local call dialup access to TIP is now available. You can now connect to TIP for the cost of a local call (as defined by your Telco) from anywhere in Australia by calling 0198 307 184.

You will have to logon as <user>@pcug.org.au rather than simply <user>, where <user> is replaced by your TIP username. This addition of the "@pcug.org.au" can also be done for normal logon to our Canberra number 6162 6500 and must be used for any broadband logon.

Except for testing that it works for you prior to going away from Canberra, the 0198 number should not be used for calls which could be made as local calls to our normal 6162 6500 Canberra number.

This new service is supplied through TransACT and will currently not work if you are logged on via TransACT broadband. We hope to have this changed in the near future so that your home "always on" connection can be left on when you go interstate and want to use the 0198 service.

We have also introduced a new TIP account type, "Local Access with Extras" to cater for the needs of members who switch away from TIP as their primary ISP but wish to retain some of the current extra benefits of a TIP account. All PCUG members are entitled to a free Local Access account which provides a small home directory and smaller single mailbox. For the payment of $20 per year, members will be able to retain "extra" benefits including a full size home directory (currently 100MB), full size mailbox (currently 25MB) and, if Household Members of PCUG, additional mailboxes.

We believe that TIP is very competitive with commercial ISPs for both dialup and broadband via TransACT. One of the features of TIP is that caps on time or download are applied over the whole of your TIP subscription period, NOT monthly as usually done by the commercials. For example, while our Medium Use Broadband quotes 2,400 MB/Month for $20/Month, if you pay for a year you can actually use 28,800 MB across the whole year - we do not mind if you use say 1,800 one month and 3,000 the next. With most of the commercial ISPs you would be charged for an excess of 600MB or have download speed throttled.

Congratulations to James Bullivant, who received the ACT runner-up prize in the 'Realising Potential Through Teamwork' Competition. Congratulations also to all those who submitted an entry.

Allan Mikkelsen

From the editor's desk

It has been a busy month for the committee. The activation of 0198 dialup for web access has, at long last, been achieved. But it still needs fine tuning as the President points out, and we ask that you do not use it where a local call is otherwise available.

The PCUG Centre is looking better every time I go there, and the staffers deserve our outspoken appreciation of their efforts to keep it running smoothly, under sometimes stressful conditions.

Involvement of members in projects is particularly noticeable this month, with the PCUG achieving prominence in Microsoft's Unlimited Potential competition, and a very willing and capable tutor commencing formal training courses before the month is over.

My own focus is on computer security, with yet another tool to prevent phishing expeditions and malicious software ruining your PC experience. Firetrust have generously donated vouchers for two valuable software packages as door prizes at our April meeting.
Anecdotal evidence indicates an increasing vulnerability of the public, and some members, to phishing expeditions and phone scams wanting your financial details. If you did not initiate the communication - as with a bank or online purchase - do not give away your credit card or bank account details. It's really as simple as that.

Beginning this month, we will try to present a review of the previous Monthly Meeting topic for the benefit of members who could not attend. Where possible we will provide links to that meeting's content, as with Microsoft's PDF file of their February presentation.

Terry Bibo

PCUG Meetings 2006

The Main Monthly Meeting will be held on the first Tuesday night each month during 2006. The planned dates are:

	4 April 2006
2 May 2006	6 June 2006
4 July 2006	1 August 2006
5 September 2006	3 October 2006
7 November 2006	5 December 2006

The meetings will commence at 7:30 pm, and are normally held in Lecture Theatre 3, Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University, Acton.
The monthly meetings are free. Members, friends, and the public are welcome to attend. Stay for coffee, tea, biscuits and good company after the meeting!

E-mail inquiries to mailto:pcug.mmm@pcug.org.au or phone 02-6287-2922

Main Monthly Meeting - Review

March 2006

The Speaker was: **Phillip Green, Electoral Commissioner, ACT Electoral Commission**

The topic was: **Electronic voting and counting for ACT Legislative Assembly election**

The guest speaker at the March meeting captivated the audience with an informative presentation on electronic voting and counting.
Phil provided a brief history of the ACT electoral system and detailed how it has evolved since that initial election in 1989, with the enormous ballot paper (that I recall curled up the sides of the booth) and the lengthy counting procedure that followed, before declaring the first Legislative Assembly for self government in the ACT.

Currently, the Hare Clark system with the Robson Rotation feature (adopted from Tasmania) is the voting procedure in the ACT. This system creates an enormous number of ballot papers, however, can be more manageable with the electronic option. The enormous number of versions of ballot papers (420 for Molonglo, 60 each for Brindabella and Ginninderra) is managed both for print and the electronic version by using automatically formatted ballot papers using computer programs.
Phil's power point presentation provided pictures of the computer equipment required to conduct electronic voting, still ensuring secret ballot.

In 2004, 13.4% of voters used electronic voting, which is a reasonable proportion and provided a virtually trouble-free system. Phil reported that feedback from those who used the system was positive. The obvious advantages over paper ballots was the ability to include different languages on the first screen, and the user-friendly format for those with a disability. I was intrigued by the quality of planning, considerable thought and development which produced the final product. Counting proved so much more accurate and less labour-intensive with the electronic voting.

A show of hands in the audience revealed that a number of those present had used the electronic option. There was lively discussion during the evening, and some intriguing questions.
After hearing the advantages and disadvantages of both systems, I felt most enlightened at the end of the evening and was convinced that electronic voting is the way to go!

Susan White

Centre News

Volunteers Required

We are seeking more volunteers to assist with maintenance of the PC network at PCUG Centre.

Those interested will need to have some experience in one or more of the following fields:

- Windows PC in a Windows Network Domain
- Windows 2003 Server (or experience with Samba 3 may suffice)

Prospective volunteers should note that the Centre is in Holder (Weston Creek) and that virtually all work must be done on site.
Those interested are invited to contact the Technical Manager:

Rod Peters
pcug-linux-contact@pcug.org.au
6251 2580 (h & w)

Planned Outage

The Centre is now operational for use by members. The two Multi-Media PCs have also been set to work recently, but will not have Internet access in the short term. That won't be a limitation for typical use of those PCs.

We will probably soon need to close the Centre to general use by members whilst new network cabling is installed. However, we will endeavour to keep the Office operating for enquiries and renewals, as has been done during all the renovations. The "outage" will be for about a week and will probably be advised by email.

Unplanned Outages

We have experienced several unplanned power outages at the Centre recently, following a substantial re-arrangement of electrical circuits by the owner of the building. The causes have been investigated from our end and we hope that some rearrangement of equipment and changes to procedures will eliminate the problem.

Members are advised to make payments for renewals in advance of due date because some payments cannot be processed during a power outage.

Rod Peters **Technical Manager**

The Beginners SIG (Special Interest Group)

This is one of several SIGs conducted within the PCUG, and is probably one of the more important ones for PC novices. It has been running for 5 years and was previously called the Night Time Internet SIG.

Meetings are held on the on the **last Tuesday** of every month - except December - at the PCUG Centre from 7-9pm

It is designed for both newcomers to computing and old timers who have computer questions they would like to ask but don't know how to
find the answer, and is essentially very basic in presentation. Visitors will always feel comfortable in the small group sessions. It supplements the Coffee and Chat SIG that has grown to the extent that it can can tend to be a bit intimidating for all but the brave. Although, that is not the intention.

Topics covered include:

- Internet.
- Search Engines - how to search the Internet.
- Outlook Express - emails - address book.
- Windows - Folders - how to file your information.
- Word - how to set up letters and use some of the icons.
- Excel - how to use spreadsheets or formulas.
- Ad Aware, Spybot, Avast and other security software.

You have the opportunity to ask any silly questions - we will try to answer them for you or we will try and help you out.

You don't need to have experience; just come along with your questions and learn some computer shortcuts.

Please contact Gordon Urquhart - 02 6254 5480 or
Marion van Wely 6258 8750 for more information.

Gordon Urquhart

Our Unlimited Potential Success

Last November, the PC User Group (being a member of the Australian Seniors Computer Clubs) and a Microsoft Unlimited Potential Centre, were invited to encourage their members to submit entries for the 'Realising Potential Through Teamwork´ competition - to create a multimedia presentation celebrating teamwork.

The competition was an opportunity for members to show off their computer skills as well as what teamwork means to them, and was just about open to any teamwork situation. It was great to see the entries come in.

Specs: The presentations can run up to three minutes and be up to 6MB, presented as a Power Point (containing images, and/or script, animation or photographs), a Photo Story, digital movie using Movie Maker or a media presentation using Flash or other online software.

One of our younger and newer members was recently thrilled to hear that his entry had taken out a runner up prize. James Bullivant is just 13 years old. **James has won an X-box for his efforts**.

James lives in the Illawarra region, and is in Year 8 at the Illawarra Christian School. James is definitely a team player, and can identify with the needs of the athletes who are preparing for the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. James states his interests as sport (especially tennis and soccer), computers, music (plays the drums), and Tae Kwon Do. and goes on proudly to list his achievements.

My achievements:-

- I've played soccer since I was 4yrs old and have two state championships to my name.
- I've done Tae Kwon Do for 5 yrs and have held a state championship title.
- Played tennis since I could hold a racquet and have been to USA once and NZ three times.
- I hold titles in New Zealand and was runner up in a USA tournament at Avila Bay.
- I have been to state teams tournaments representing the South East Region. (It seems this list could be so long that the detail eludes him).

James goes on to say, *"On the computer I like to make movies, play games, play music, and enjoy the computer environment as well as talk to people."*

James' entry may be viewed at: http://www.pcug.org.au/files/KOOLMOVIE.wmv

To make the movie

1. I used windows movie maker to set out the movie
2. I went out to look for a connection to an old AV video camera.
3. I took the video camera and I put some of the video on to movie that I was creating. I used some of my Dad's cool video shots of me playing soccer in the state finals.
4. I started to find a track of music to put it on the movie as background music

James' advice: take about 2-3 days on it and you will be proud of your work. You will know when it is not right cause there will be something small to work on. (I believe he means something small that will stand out).

His final words of appreciation to PCUG. ***Thanks for this experience!!!!!!!***

Congratulations James from PCUG.

(We owe our thanks to Karen Colmenares, Office Manager, for her efforts in encouraging this

SiteHound - Security For Your PC

This is a particularly pertinent topic these days. Only last month I introduced the Netcraft Toolbar as an anti-phishing tool, and I follow up this month with a personal practical application of that protection. And I saw a beta of IE7 recently that includes the same protection.

Now Firetrust, the company that sells the anti-spam applications MailWasher and MailWasher Pro., has released a powerful package that addresses this problem and more.

On installation SiteHound appears as a toolbar below
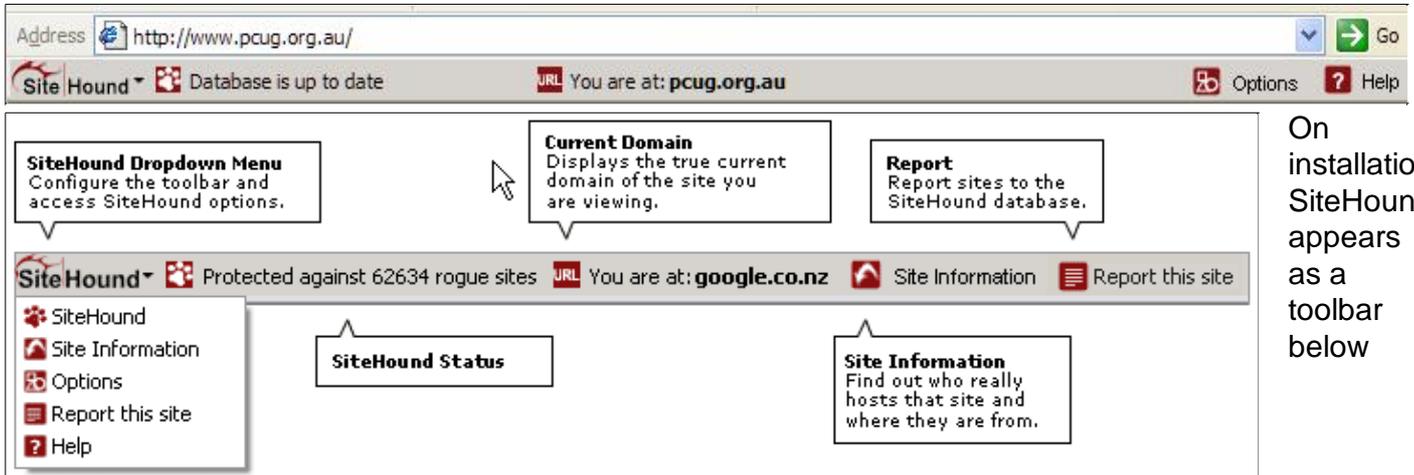
the Address toolbar for IE, giving quick access to Options, Help and Site Information. In this last item it does not provide the wealth of detail available from Netcraft - only the Site Owner Information (Registrant); Site Owner IP Address; Country; and Site Location Information (Registrar). But it is certainly adequate and I suppose one could argue that the protection is what counts, and an excess of information might be confusing or even unwelcome. The SiteHound Status cycles between the number of rogue sites, the number of users currently protected, and the update status of the database.

SiteHound comes in two flavours, free and registered, and it is only in the registered version that this Site Information image is available.

Once installed SiteHound requires registration to create a user ID in order to use the software. This is sent as email and entered in the user account to activate the program

SiteHound maintains an extensive database of malicious websites that is constantly being updated by

security experts assisted by the user community. Database updates can be scheduled in the registered version and will automatically update every day. Unregistered users must check manually to ensure that they always have the latest additions.

You are encouraged to report suspicious sites by filling in the eminently clear form provided by the toolbar. The report asks that you categorise the URL when it is not patently obvious, and defines a number of categories including Adware, Phishing, Adult material, Scams, Spyware and so on.

SiteHound provides protection when browsing the Internet by raising an alert when you enter a site that is known to be fraudulent, offensive or associated with spyware. It

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*If you choose to visit a site, even if SiteHound™ has not categorized it
as potentially unsafe, you do so entirely at your own risk. We shall not
be liable for any consequences whatsoever of such visit.*

does not block you from visiting the site, but warns you and leaves the option up to you.The enhanced version has a more informative graphical presentation, and subsequently provides a wealth of additional information on the nature and perpetrator of the threat.

In summary, SiteHound will try to protect you from:

- Fraudulent claims or scams.
- Offensive material.
- Security vulnerabilities.
- Spyware or Adware.
- Spam related material or other content deemed to be unsafe.
- Thousands of fake bank and credit sites.
- Tens of thousands of pornographic and adult sites.
- The endless fake phishing and pharming sites.
- Adware sites, which can infect you with spyware and adware if you visit them.
- Downloading software which may infect your computer with spyware and adware.

With the amount of malicious software increasing almost exponentially these days it is becoming essential to prevent attacks rather than recover from them, and that is the approach taken by the producers of SiteHound. It may well replace other software we have become almost reliant on. You have nothing to lose by giving it a try.

Enjoy your computing.   Terry Bibo

Insight into Word Passwords with Cutting Edge Recovery Tool

Word Password Recovery Master is a new revolutionary solution for the recovery of MS Word passwords. It combines the highest speed of recovery and an amazing simplicity of use. Reinforced by the online decryption support, the recovery engine ensures instant password recovery while safeguarding users' proprietary information. It is an instant solution to a password loss that is both simple and secure.

Rixler Software today announces the release of Word Password Recovery Master, a potent solution to decrypt or disable password protection in Microsoft Word documents. The solution presents a combination of on-location and online assistance in removing "open", "protection", and "write" passwords from user's documents. It effectively handles default encryption in versions Word 97 through 2003. Complementary work of both components of the solution ensures instant recovery for passwords of any length or complexity.

"The recovery engine applied in Word Password Recovery Master consummates our long experience of work with encryption technologies," says Felix Kosolapov, PRO of Rixler Software. "Microsoft Word uses different types of document protection. That asks for the selective application of recovery strategies. There is no point applying a brute-force or a dictionary attack where the password can be reset. In case when the attack strategy proves more effective, we involve a company server to do the heavy lifting. Since it works with just two dozen of service bytes, users can be sure their privacy is protected. No sensitive data ever leave their systems through our service traffic."

Word Password Recovery Master can instantly remove "open" and "protection" passwords, however lengthy and complex they are. It also recovers a "write" password, so that the user can edit the file. Just a couple of clicks will take you to copy the recovered password to the clipboard and paste it into Word dialogues. After the user specifies a protected document, everything is done automatically. You can open an unlocked document right from the window. The program makes password recovery a snap.

In the world where privacy is constantly threatened we have to protect it. The burden of passwords is the price we pay for protection. A loss or unexpected change of passwords is a natural thing, one of life's many vicissitudes. At such moments you can rely on professional competence of Rixler Software and their line of password recovery solutions.

Word Password Recovery Master v1.0 Features at a Glance - Support for MS Word 97/2000/XP/2003 (DOC and DOT files) with default protection (except Word 97 French version); - Ability to remove "open" and "protection" passwords; - Ability to recover "write" password; - Online password recovery service with guaranteed privacy; - Instant recovery of passwords of any length and complexity; - Ability to copy recovered passwords to the clipboard; - Support for multilingual passwords; - Password protection against unauthorized program access; - Friendly user interface.

Pricing and Availability
Word Password Recovery Master 1.0 runs under Windows 95/98/2000/2003/ME/NT/XP and costs $29.95 (USD) for a single-user license. The license includes the online decryption support for a single "open" password and the unlimited use for "write" and "protection" passwords. The company offers flexible discounts starting with the purchase of two and more licences. Registered users are entitled to free technical support. A demo version with imited functionality is available at http://www.rixler.com/download/wpasrec.zip.

A Little Bit of Safety in This Unsafe World

An easy to use and more than affordable encryption utility gives the information stored on your computer 100% protection"

EXLADE, Inc. announces the release of version 2.1 of **Cryptic Disk**, a popular disk encryption tool that uses a trusted, validated algorithm (AES-256) chosen by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and stated to be the cryptographic standard for years to come. AES-256 is a FIPS-approved symmetric encryption algorithm that may be used by U.S. Government organizations and others to protect sensitive information. Cryptic Disk easily creates encrypted disk partitions to keep private and confidential data secure. Cryptic Disk allows to 100% protect the privacy of the important data and ensures that only the owner of the documents will get access to the protected data in accordance with the defined user privileges.

"Cryptic Disk has been developed as a utility to work with hard drives, but it works just as well with removable storage media, such as USB Flash drives. It's all simple - once the data is encrypted, the files cannot be accessed by any person who does not know the password. After decryption, all files become accessible and the hard drive works normally," says Vasil Mikulich, the author of Cryptic Disk. "You can use Cryptic Disk either at home or in the office. We also added multiple users support to the program, so different degrees of access privileges for different users can be set by the system administrator. As a result each user will have access to the encrypted data that he or she has the access rights to, but not to the data of others."

Cryptic Disk is a reliable solution whenever there is a need for data protection on a shared computer, a need to strongly protect confidential documents, emails, business agreements, personal letters, tax returns or receipts, bank accounts or any other sensitive information. Users do not need any special knowledge in security to start protecting their private information. No wonder Peter Marx, one of the customers, expressed his gratitude in such words: "You guys have a good program, here. Good interface, easy to understand and use. I chose yours over Dekart Private Disk and SecurStar DriveCrypt".

With the new version of Cryptic Disk come several useful features. Operating Cryptic Disk became faster and easier as you can now specify system hotkeys for the main operations in the program, like mount or dismount encrypted volumes. It is also made possible to select multiple users in the User Management dialog box. What it means is that each encrypted disk/partition can have its list of users with individual passwords and access rights. The disk administrator (the user who created the disk) or other users authorized by the administrator can manage the list of users. Among other improvements are individual settings for each encrypted disk, an option to configure mounted encrypted disks to be automatically unmounted, etc.

Cryptic Disk Features at a Glance:
- Your disk(s) (including removable media) are secured with a powerful and robust encryption algorithm (AES-256) ensuring that only authorized users may access it;
- Encrypted disks and partitions can be erased and converted into regular ones any time you like;
- Individual password and access rights for each user of an encrypted disk ;
- Password protection for Cryptic Disk itself to limit access to the program by other users of the computer;
- Friendly interface. No need to reboot your computer after installation of the program;
- Look at the price and be surprised. Cryptic Disk IS cheaper than its rivals.

Pricing and Availability
Cryptic Disk 2.1 runs under Windows 2000/XP/2003 Server and costs $49.95 (USD) for a Home license or $69.95 (USD) for a Business license. There is a progressive discount according to the

number of licenses you purchase (for example, it is only $13.95 (USD) for 100-1000 Home licenses). Registered customers are entitled to free updates and lifetime technical support. An evaluation version of **Cryptic Disk** is available as a free download at http://www.exlade.com/download/crdisksetup.zip (1.8 Mb).

About System Restore

Coffee & Chat has stimulated considerable discussion in certain circles over the System Restore function in XP, and Lars Hederer's ERUNT (Emergency Recovery Utility NT) for backing-up/restoring the registry and associated files.

Baillie McKenny quoted an excellent article on System Restore from Woody's Windows Watch that I cannot find in the archives. So here are a few facts from other sources. I'll keep them brief and pertinent.

System Restore is a feature of Windows ME and XP - Home and Professional. It enables users to restore their computers to a previously safe state in the event of a disaster, by monitoring file changes and creating restore points. This can be done at any time while Windows is running, and XP will handle the change and restart as necessary.

The System Restore function is enabled by default and makes restore points on significant system events, provided that a minimum of 200 MB of free space is available on the system partition. If 200 MB is not available, System Restore will be disabled. Users can create restore points at any time.

By default it only uses a maximum of 12% of disk capacity, but that is easily changed by the administrator. And it purges the oldest restore points to make room for new ones, so restore points older than 90 days are deleted by default.

It is not possible to make a permanent restore point. System Restore is a change-base tracking tool, not a backup tool. Each restore point only stores changes to the system since the creation of the previous restore point, and all restore points are associated. For example, if a user wants to restore the computer from point D to point A, System Restore will have to use points C and B as well along the way.

Significant system events are:

- System checkpoints, created automatically every 24 hours (during times of inactivity).
- Program installation checkpoints, created every time you install or uninstall a program that is Windows XP restore point compliant, or whenever you install an unsigned driver (a software program that controls a hardware device) that has not been certified as being Windows XP compliant.
- Windows automatic update checkpoints, created immediately before installing an update to Windows.
- Performing a System Restore operation itself, so the user can undo that restore operation if needed.

System Restore is also made available to users in safe mode, making it easier for them to restore their computers to a state before problems occurred.

System Restore monitors only a core set of specified system and application file types, including:

- Registry. The Windows XP Registry is found in C:\WINDOWS\system32\config\ with the six files that carry no extension and are named Default, Sam, Security, Software, System, and Userdiff. There are five primary Keys in XP, also called hives, which accounts for the H in their names:
    - HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT - file types and OLE information.
    - HKEY_CURRENT_USER - configuration information for the current user account.
    - HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE - configuration information about the computer for all users.
    - HKEY_USERS - configuration information for certain preferences (such as colours and control panel settings) for each of the users of the computer.
    - HKEY_CURRENT_CONFIG - current hardware configuration.
- Local Profiles. User profile information is stored in Ntuser.dat in C:\Documents and Settings\{username} folders.
- COM+ DB. The COM+ Class Registration Database.
- WFP.dll cache
- WMI DB
- IIS Metabase
- Drivers
- Auto/Windows update installed bits
- File types as specified in the SDK document Monitored File Extensions

When you revert to a restore point you lose all changes since that point, except for changes to files in the My Documents folder and documents you've created with applications such as Microsoft Word and

Microsoft Excel, and e-mail, browsing history, or favourites.

Woody is very specific about the security of the folder where the restore files are kept, and I quote him below:

Restore-point data gets stored in folders named:

C:\System Volume Information_restore {7AC41853-D197-43DD-A331-D376ADD98AC2}\RPXXX

The XXX at the end of that string is a sequential number incremented with each new restore point. Don't bother trying to look for the files, by the way: Windows goes to great lengths to hide them from you; you can't even get into the \System Volume Information folder.

This is for good reason. There's absolutely nothing in there that you should ever change by hand. Moreover, by blocking those files from your prying eyes, Microsoft is also keeping Trojans (and worms and viruses) from using your privileged security level to clobber your system restore points.

If you really want to see a list of files that contain your restore points, navigate to C:\Windows\system32\Restore and run the program Srdiag.exe. You can then look at the SR-RP.log file to see a list of all available restore points, and SR-RstrLog.txt to see details about the files.

Unfortunately he is uninformed in this case, and I quote from an article I wrote in July 2004:

The System Volume Information folder will not be visible by default, and it will be necessary to open <u>My Computer</u>> <u>Tools</u>> <u>Folder Options</u>> and click on the <u>View</u> tab. Scroll down to <u>Hidden files and folders</u> and ensure that the option to <u>Show hidden files and folders</u> is selected. Scroll down further and ensure that <u>Hide protected operating system files (Recommended)</u> is unchecked. Click <u>OK</u> to save these settings. You should now be able to go to the System Volume Information folder on drive C: and double click it to reveal the '_restore' directory.

If you cannot open the System Volume Information folder then it is because you do not have user access, but this is not insurmountable. Right click this folder and click the <u>Properties</u> option. Click on the <u>Sharing</u> tab> tick the box <u>Share this folder on the network</u>> enter a user name in the <u>Share name:</u> box (I use admin) and click <u>OK</u> to exit.

These images, created only moments ago, prove the point.
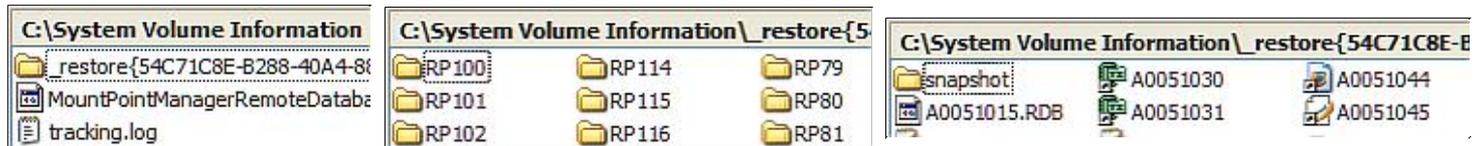
As a matter of interest, with 12% allocated, I had 49 restore points covering the past 30 days. They totalled 2.35 GB in file space, but occupied only 1.18 GB on disk because of compression.
By reducing allocated space to 5%, my restore points were reduced to 32 covering 12 days and occupying 1.53 GB of file space and 803 MB of disk space.
I can't see myself wanting to restore to a point a month old, so I'll leave it at that. I make disk images with Acronis far more frequently than that, anyway.

About ERUNT

ERUNT is undoubtedly a valuable utility that offers an easy and reliable way of creating and restoring registry backups without the overhead of System Restore. But it is not a replacement.
In the days of Windows 98 and flowing on to Windows ME, registry backups were made automatically on the first start of the PC each day. By default, five copies were kept in Win98 and provided a basic recovery method if a corrupt registry prevented rebooting. XP does not have this automatic backup facility built-in, and Lars Hederer decided to write a program that provided this, and full details are available on his homepage. His ERUNT will create registry backups for 30 days, with each backup having its own folder, and the oldest dropping off the list as a new one is added. The folders are stored in Windows\ERDNT\xxxx-xx-xx and identified by their date labels. Each folder contains an executable file that restores the registry to that date's state. On my PC these folders average around 27.5 MB, so a month's

worth could approach a gigabyte of file space.
Fortunately this is configurable and I have cut mine back to 7 days.

From ERUNT 1.1j documentation:
"The command line tool AUTOBACK.EXE uses the same syntax as ERUNT but performs the additional task of deleting old restore folders after the new backup has been created."
In my Startup folder I execute:
C:\Program Files\ERUNT\AUTOBACK.EXE" %SystemRoot%\ERDNT\AutoBackup\#Date# /noconfirmdelete /days:7

Mike Boesen has written a very good article that explains how to configure ERUNT so that the number of days is 7 or whatever else you prefer. His article also explains options for reinstating any registry that has been created using ERUNT. His article (and others - e.g. one on Backup strategies) can be accessed from here: http://www.pcug.org.au/~boesen/

ERUNT has the advantage over System restore in that it can readily be run immediately before installing software you might only want to preview - such as offerings on magazine CDs.
Don't like it? Delete it, and restore the registry from the ERDNT file. Fast and effective. This can be done at any time from within Windows Explorer or equivalent.
This is not possible in Windows XP because it encrypts some registry keys. The Export Registry File function of Regedit will not work in this simple mode. You would need to use the Backup utility software to effectively backup an XP registry.

ERUNT backup options include:

- System registry: The current system registry, usually consisting of the files DEFAULT, SAM, SECURITY, SOFTWARE, and SYSTEM.
- Current user registry: The registry files for the currently logged-on user, usually NTUSER.DAT and USRCLASS.DAT.
- Other open user registries: Sometimes Windows has a few other user registries in memory. Examples for this are "generic" registries, e.g. for user "EVERYONE", or registries of other users if you use Fast Task Switching in Windows XP.

For the computer literati Lars Hederer makes this proviso:
(Technical information: ERUNT saves only registry files which are in use by the system. It obtains information about these files from
registry key HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet\Control\ hivelist. Registry hives not listed there, for example those
of other users of the computer, cannot be saved by ERUNT.)

Judicious use of ERUNT might save you from having to do a System Restore **if the problem lies in the registry,** and this is probably most often the case. Certainly it is a wise approach to try restoring the registry initially, as that preserves any Windows Updates you might have done, or programs you might have installed since creating a restore point. But, since ERUNT does not monitor these other complex changes made to your system, it cannot be a replacement for System Restore. Use both of them wisely.

Terry Bibo   March 2006

Freeware discussion

Windows Product Activation

The recent release of [Windows Defender for XP](), Microsoft's free antispyware software, may have brought to many users' attention the requirement to validate their installation of the XP operating system before being permitted to install the new software.

This is part of the Microsoft Product Activation policy to ensure that their software is legitimately licensed, and is not a pirated version. It applies to both operating systems and other software. Product Activation works by verifying that a software program's product key has not been used on more personal computers than intended by the software's license. When the product key is used to install software it is then transformed into an installation ID number. An activation wizard provides the installation ID number to Microsoft and a confirmation ID is sent back to your machine to activate the product. The installation ID number includes an encrypted form of the product ID and a hardware hash, or checksum. The confirmation ID is simply an unlocking code for the Windows XP installation on that particular PC.

When XP is installed Windows uses ten categories of hardware to create the hardware hash needed for activation.These are:

1. Display Adapter
2. SCSI Adapter
3. IDE Adapter (effectively the motherboard)
4. Network Adapter (NIC) and its MAC Address
5. RAM Amount Range (i.e., 0-64mb, 64-128mb, etc.)
6. Processor Type
7. Processor Serial Number
8. Hard Drive Device
9. Hard Drive Volume Serial Number (VSN)
10. CD-ROM / CD-RW / DVD-ROM

From these it then calculates and records a number based on the first device of each type that was found during setup, and stores this number on your hard drive.

The hardware is subsequently checked each time Windows boots, to ensure that it is still on the same machine. WPA asks for 'votes´ from each of these ten categories: 'Is the same device still around, or has there never been one?´ Seven Yes votes means all is well — and a NIC, present originally and not changed, counts for three yes votes! Minor cards, like sound cards, don´t come into the mix at all. If, on Windows startup, there are not the required seven Yes votes, the system will continue to boot normally for three days, during which time you will be able to contact the activation centre via the net. Activations on the same PC using the same product key are unlimited.

This is very much a simplified explanation of the process taken from a comprehensive article by Alex Nichol, MS-MVP, and available at [http://aumha.org/win5/a/wpa.htm.]()

Windows Genuine Advantage

This is a logical progression from product activation, and is where Microsoft determines whether your installation of XP is legitimate before allowing updates, or downloads of some software like Windows Defender. Periodically Microsoft will require you to run a [validation program]() that creates a match between your PC's hardware profile and your 25-character Product Key, which Microsoft stores and checks against future activation and validation attempts.

Initially this will require that you download and run a file named GenuineCheck.exe or legitcheck.hta, which installs the program on your PC and, if successful, authorises you to proceed with the

download. Or it will be a Wizard that walks you through the steps. And it is also available as a Windows Update (KB892130).

Advantages of validation are:

* Free downloads from the Microsoft Download Center.
* Free updates for Windows from Windows Update.
* Special offers, including free downloads, special promotions, and discounts.

One of these free downloads is Photo Story 3 for Windows

Photo Story 3 can create a video story that features narrated photographs from a digital album. In a few simple steps, you can import and edit your pictures, add titles, record narration, add background music, and save your story using the optimal quality settings (profile) for the way your story will be played. Subsequently any program that plays Windows Media Video (WMV) files, such as Windows Media Player version 7 or later, can be used to view your story.

Making your own DVDs is just a click away with the Sonic DVD Plug-in for Photo Story 3 . Get more information on the Sonic Web site and download the plug-in for $19.99 US.

Digital Discussion

AKVIS Noise Buster: noise suppression for digital and scanned images

Digital cameras opened the door to easy and entertaining photography. However, consumer digital cameras also have their drawbacks: they often produce the so-called digital noise. It can be seen as grains that compromise the smoothness of the photo. It is especially annoying on the skin as it makes it uneven. This kind of noise is called luminance noise. There can also be chroma (colour) noise which is perceived as random red and blue pixels spoiling the colour accuracy of the snap-shot.

Digital noise can be produced by a number of factors: heating of the camera sensor, long exposure shooting, small pixel size (therefore digital compact cameras generate much noisier images than digital SLRs), high ISO settings, etc.

AKVIS Noise Buster reduces both luminance and colour noise on digital images without spoiling other aspects of the photo. Now your photos look neat and accomplished.

Look up examples at:
http://akvis.com/en/noise-buster/examples-reduce-noise.php

The plug-in's window shows Before and After images for instant preview and easy tweaking of the parameters. You can switch between the windows with a click on the image. Separate setting areas for luminance and colour noise allow you to deal with each kind of noise in the most efficient way. For further adjustment you have a few advanced parameters at your disposal. The program is equally useful both for professional and home users.

AKVIS Noise Buster is a plug-in. It requires image processing program that supports plugins. AKVIS Noise Buster is compatible with Adobe Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Jasc paint Shop pro, etc. The software runs on Microsoft Windows 98/ME/2000/XP/NT and on Macintosh Mac OS X 10.3, PowerPC G3 and above.

AKVIS Noise Buster sells for $49.00 US. One license key allows activating the software on two computers, for example, on a desktop and on a laptop. AKVIS Alchemy Bundle (a bundle of 6 photo correction and restoration plug-ins, including Noise Buster) sells for $270.00 USD, saving you $150.00 USD over buying each plug-in separately.

For a free trial, AKVIS offers 10 days of fully functional use. Details are available at http://akvis.com/en/noise-buster/index.php

Anatomy of a Phishing Scam

A few days ago I got this message in my email. Having just espoused the value of the Netcraft Toolbar as a weapon against phishing fraud I practised what I preached, and sent the full message to scam@netcraft.com.

*Dear * *ANZ Bank* *valued member*,

The security of your information, transactions, and money is the core of our business and our top priority at Anz Bank.

Our policy is to protect personal or financial information which comes into our possession during the normal course of business.
It has come to our attention that your account information needs
to be updated due to inactive members, frauds and spoof reports.
If you could please take 5-10 minutes out of your online experience and renew
your records you will not run into any future problems with the online service.
However, failure to update your records will result in account erasure.
This notification expires on February 25, 2006.

Please follow the link below and renew your account information.

https://www.anz.com/inetbank/banklogin.asp
<http://203.154.48.115/.anz.com/index.php>

Once you have updated your account records your internet banking service will not be interrupted and will continue as normal.

Online Department
Anz Bank

To avoid junk mail Netcraft required that I verify my message, which I did by simply replying to their request. Their response was rapid.

So I then logged into the ANZ site to see where it lead, and got this result. Note that this is a legitimate address and has the padlock indicating it is a secure site. But its link is no longer available. Because the scam has already been discovered?

To complete the exercise I then logged into the second URL, which is where the scam would have sent me. Here is its page, and all is revealed. The URL has been blocked. But once you saw its risk rating and its location you should never have proceeded anyway.
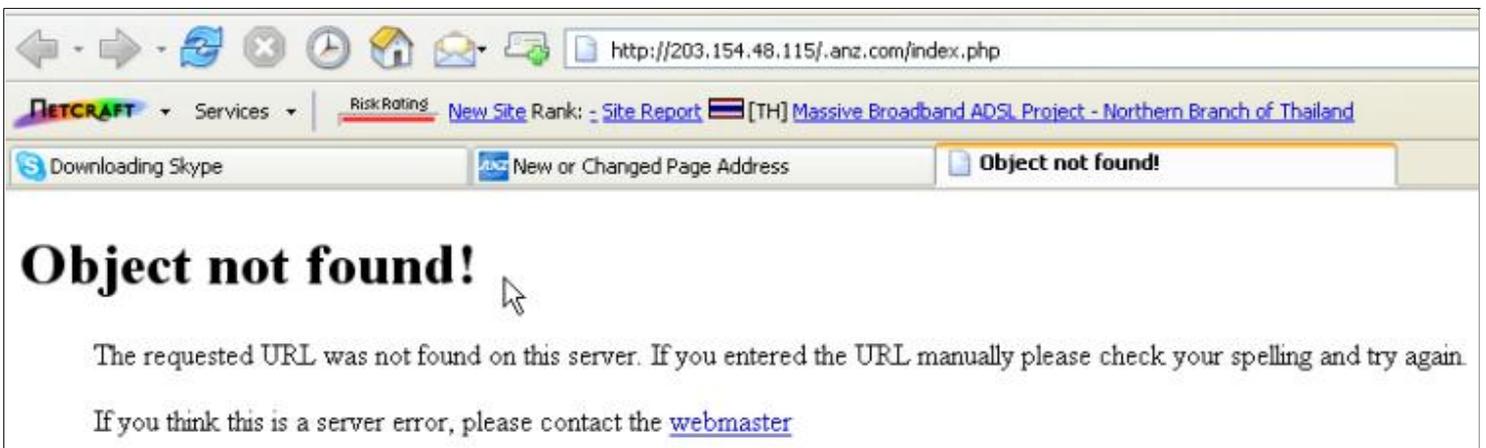
Finally, the site report closes the case. Get yourself the Netcraft Toolbar. Firefox users can download it as an Extension.

Shortly after I had logged on to the URL it was blocked by Netcraft with the warning:

Phishing Site detected!

The page you are trying to visit has been blocked by the Netcraft Toolbar because it is believed to be part of a fraudulent phishing attack.

URL: http://203.154.48.115/.anz.com/index.php

If this is a mistake, please report it using 'Report Incorrectly Blocked URL' in the Netcraft Menu.

Do you still want to go there?

Yes   No

Enjoy Safe Computing.   Terry Bibo

Digimate II-Plus

Smart Portable Storage - A New Toy

Specifications:

Standalone copy/backup contents of flash memory cards to Digimate ll - no computer needed.
-   Backup your digital photographs, video, audio and data files while on the road, without a computer.

High Speed USB2.0 Portable Hard Disk
-   External data storage and backup for PC and Mac
-   480Mbps Maximum transfer rate.

Card Reader for memory cards
-   Supports major flash media cards
-   Copy and transfer files between flash media cards and computer.
-   Cards supported SM, SD, CF l/ll, MS, XD, MMC, MD and Mspro.
-   Long name terminology
-   Compact Flash Type l/ll.
-   Hitachi MicroDrive.
-   SmartMedia Card.
-   Memory Stick, Memory Stick Pro.
-   Secure Digital Card.
-   Multimedia Card.
-   XD Card.

Key Features:

-   Mine has a Toshiba Disk Drive MK 4025Gas, 40GB 2.5" lap top HDD.
-   You can put in 2.5 inch 10, 20, 30, 40, 60 or 80MB Hard Disk Drives
-   These have to be formatted to support Fat32/16 support for Hard Disk Drives, and they will support Fat 12/16/32 for memory cards.
-   Internal Lithium-ion Rechargeable Battery.
-   3hrs charging time.
-   Battery Life 2 hours
-   Weight: 145g (excluding hard disk and accessories).
-   240g including hard disk drive.
-   USB2.0 Interface, USB1.1 compatible.
-   USB Cable
-   Soft Carry Case, I also purchased a DSE Camera Case with better protection (about $14.00) which fits the DigiMate ll Plus and the   power supply in the large pocket, and the USB Cable in the front pocket of the case.
-   Universal AC Power Adapter (100 Volt to 240Volt AC).
-   Size: 75mm x 115mm x 22mm

PC system requirements:

- Available USB-compatible port.
- Microsoft Windows XP/2000/Me/98SE or Linux Kernel 2.4 and above.
- They also add an 85mm CD-ROM for Win 98 support Drivers.

I received this at the end of December 2005 from Jack and Eva Zhang for my trip overseas and had a couple of weeks to try and test it. It has only two buttons, one for power ON/OFF and one for the transfer to the HDD, it would copy the memory card from the camera OK, it shows total size of the memory card used and scale up to 100% on the transfer bar.
The Blue & Black letter screen also shows battery life and how much HDD space (say 40GB) and, as you use it, it will go down in GB size. I setup my XP computer with the USB port saying it was J-Drive and it would copy the contents on to my HDD with no problems.

Now Windows XP would not show the contents of the drive, so how do I delete the folders on the Digimate's HDD ??????? I know XP can read Fat 32 files and folders, why did it not show? I did not have much time left to work on that problem as I had to go to Newcastle, so on to the Windows 98SE computer a Fat 32 formatted HDD, load the software drivers for Win98SE, this was OK as it showed all the files and folders I had loaded, this meant I could delete the Folders and files OK and have a clean Digimate HDD before going away, end of testing.

I flew out to Singapore and started using the Sony Digital Camera with an Mspro card, also had a spare card as well for when the card was full. Out with the Digimate and transfer the Mspro card's data to the HDD, then format the memory card in the camera and start over again. Well off to Vietnam with Vietnam Air, boy did they show up just how bad Qantas food is. I could download the memory card any time on boats, cars while they were moving and only lose a small amount of time. The best example was when I had just come out of the Cu Chi tunnels and we were due for a Tea break part of the tour. Out with the Digimate and copied the memory card, and the crowd that started to arrive and ask questions it was amazing, even the young tour guide asked lots of questions and he understood the technology very well. We then went back to Singapore, then Malaysia to Malaka or (Melaka) both spellings are OK, great place, then Kuala Lumpur or KL as it's known, back to Singapore and then home.

I have transferred all the Folders and files on the Win98SE Computer and very pleased with the Digimate, only have to solve the XP problem of displaying the folders.
The other good thing is that the Digimate turns itself off after transferring the files to the HDD. I did not have to charge up the battery while I was away and it did not look like running down. I purchase this because a 1GB memory card costs $150.00 and this cost $225.00 for 40GB of saved files, also an extra USB external 40GB HDD.
Sony have just released their version HDPSM10 40GB @ $449.00.

Merv Commons   **February 2006**

More humour from the net

Notable Quotes

- **Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself, "Lillian, you should have remained a virgin."**

  - Lillian Carter (mother of 39th President, Jimmy Carter)

- **I had a rose named after me and I was very flattered. But I was not pleased to read the description in the catalog: "No good in a bed, but fine against a wall."**

  - Eleanor Roosevelt

- **Last week, I stated this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement.**

  - Mark Twain

- **The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.**

  - George Burns

- **Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year.**

  - Victor Borge

- **Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.**

  - Mark Twain

- **What would men be without women? Scarce, sir...mighty scarce.**

  - Mark Twain

- **By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.**

  - Socrates

- **I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.**

  - Groucho Marx

- **My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she stops to breathe.**

  - Jimmy Durante

- **The male is a domestic animal which, if treated with firmness and kindness, can be trained to do most things.**

  - Jilly Cooper

- **I have never hated a man enough to give his diamonds back.**

- Zsa Zsa Gabor

- **Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.**

  - Alex Levine

- **Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.**

  - Mark Twain

- **My luck is so bad that if I bought a cemetery, people would stop dying.**

  - Ed Furgol

- **Money can't buy you happiness... but it does bring you a more pleasant form of misery.**

  - Spike Milligan

- **What's the use of happiness? It can't buy you money.**

  - Henny Youngman

- **I am opposed to millionaires... but it would be dangerous to offer me the position.**

  - Mark Twain

- **Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was shut up.**

  - Joe Namath

- **Youth would be an ideal state if it came a little later in life.**

  - Herbert Henry Asquith

- **I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.**

  - Bob Hope

- **I never drink water because of the disgusting things that fish do in it.**

  - W C Fields

- **We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress.**

  - Will Rogers

- **Don't worry about avoiding temptation... as you grow older, it will avoid you.**

  - Winston Churchill

- **Maybe it's true that life begins at fifty, but everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out.**

  - Phyllis Diller

- **The cardiologist's diet: If it tastes good, spit it out.**

- Unknown

- **By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere.**

  - Billy Crystal

PCUG Help Directory

The people in this directory are volunteers, so please observe the times given. The Help Directory is designed to help individual users and should not be used as a substitute for corporate support calls to vendors. This service is provided for members only.
Email addresses have been altered to foil spam farmers; just replace the @ symbol.
Please quote your membership number to the helper. Additions or amendments to this directory should be sent to
editor@pcug.org.au

Region	Subject	Name	Email	Phone	Days	Times
	Home Installation Team (HIT)	John Telek	tweek at pcug.org.au	0418605930	All days	Any decent time
Chifley	WinXP, PC hardware, Connections Home Installation Team (HIT)	John Saxon	jsaxon at pcug.org.au	6161 1524	All days	9am to 7pm
Dickson	WinXP, Mozilla, Office XP	John Agnew	jfa at pcug.org.au	6249 7911 0411147321	All days	9am to 9pm
Fisher	MS Word, Excel, Lotus WordPro, Agent	Derek Jordan	Derek.Jordan at tpg.com.au	6288 7810	All days	Any decent time
Flynn	Flight Simulator	Roger Lowery	bandrlowery at optusnet.com.au	6258 1583	All days	Any decent time
Hall Village	Noteworthy Composer	Andrew Purdam	apurdam at pcug.org.au	6230 2231	All days	Any decent time
Hawker	Home Installation Team (HIT) Internet connections, software and hardware.	Gordon Urquhart	gordonu at pcug.org.au	6254 5480	All days	Any decent time
Holt	FrontPage, Publisher, Internet Explorer	Gary Potts	gjpotts at pcug.org.au	6254 2818 0402342818	Mon Wed Sat	9:00am to 12:00 noon
Macquarie	Linux	Rod Peters	rpeters at pcug.org.au	6251 2580	All days	9am to 7pm
O'Connor	Digital Photography, Paint Shop Pro, Paint Shop Album	Jeff Colwell	jeffmeg at webone.com.au	6247 7756	All days	9am to 8pm
Page	Free software - installation and advice	Terry Bibo	tbibo at pcug.org.au	6255 2168	All days	9am to 7pm

Some handy links

Committee	http://www.pcug.org.au/members/committee/index.htm

Members	
Monthly Calendar	**http://www.pcug.org.au/members/calendar/**
Special Interest Groups	**http://www.pcug.org.au/activities/sigs.htm**
Members' Services & Charges	http://www.pcug.org.au/member_info/services.htm

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