

Motherboard

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April 2005

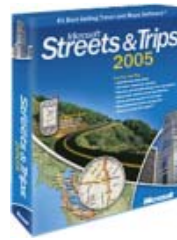
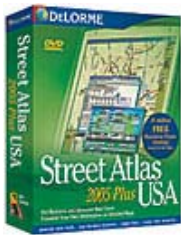
COMPUTER USERS GROUP OF REDDING PRESENTS

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

GPS & Map Prgs

(Global Positioning System)

Presented by
Bill Ball



Showing the advantages and ease of use of mapping programs and GPS positioning units while traveling.

Main Door Prize Is

Microsoft Windows XP Professional

Plus Two More Door Prizes

One free ticket to each person at the door!

Check at the door for your name tag

and please leave it in the Tag Box when the meeting is over.

Ticket Sales, Social Time, & Question/Answer Time Begins at 6:30 PM

Club Business and Program Presentation Begins at 7 PM
coffee and tea available

Future Presentation:

May - Digital Imaging Pro Version 10, Paul Colligan

Club Calendar

DTP SIG

1:30 PM, MONDAY, APR 11, 18
MAY 2, 9, 16

WINDOWS & MORE

10 AM, MONDAY, APR 11, 18
MAY 2, 9, 16

GENERAL MEETING

6:30 PM, TUESDAY, APR 19

MULTI-MEDIA

10 AM, SATURDAY, APR 23

BOARD MEETING

1 PM, MONDAY, APR 25
at Jack-In-The-Box,

Dana Dr.

SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE SIG INFO

The IBM/PC USERS GROUP OF REDDING
meets at the Palo Cedro Church Of Christ,
21895 St. Francis Way.
For more information
phone 241-3902 and
leave a message.



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About the Motherboard

The *Motherboard* newsletter is published monthly by the Computer Users Group of Redding, PO Box 494778, Redding, CA 96049-4778. The CUG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Subscriptions are included in the \$25 annual membership fee. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform members of upcoming events and provide information about the use of IBM compatible computers.

Disclaimer: Neither the CUG, its Officers, the Editor, nor the newsletter contributors assume any liability for damages occurred due to the use of information provided in this publication.

Reprints: Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author, CUG and the *Motherboard*. Mail a copy of the newsletter where the article is

reprinted to the Editor at the address in the first paragraph of this text.

Personal Ads For Members:

Requirements are:

1. Advertiser must be a member.
2. The item must be computer-related.
3. The ad must be received by editor J. Ball by the *monthly date of the board meeting*. Sorry, no exceptions.

Other terms must be approved by the club's Board of Officers and Directors.

Article Submissions: All articles and re-views must be submitted to J. Ball by the *Monday of the monthly Board meeting (see Page 1 for date.)* Sorry, no exceptions.

Motherboard Editor reserves the right to make corrections and deletions in all articles in the interest of grammar, style, and space.

Editors Corner

It's your club. Your input is of value to us...

FROM THE EDITOR YOUR SUBMISSIONS WANTED

Any club member who wishes to submit an article for the newsletter, please never hesitate. If you have a flair for writing, or something to say about the club, or computer related subjects, send it in to me. An article a month, or one once-in-a-while, would be so much fun coming from our own club members.

I also welcome all ideas and inserts. Just please be careful that it is not something that is copy-righted. Nothing from a newspaper or magazine can be used unless written permission has been obtained before submitting it to me.

Submissions must be e-mailed to me in RTF format (call me and I will explain what RTF means). The deadline each month is the date of the board meeting as posted on Page 1, far right column of the Motherboard.

Dorothy Kirk of the *Surfboard* on Page 4 is semi retiring in June after seven years, and is offering the popular spot to any member who would like to check out the web on a monthly, or semi monthly, schedule for the club. If you are interested, e-mail me and I will explain more.



TIME OUT

Bill and I were very happy to come home after our trip to Arizona and Ohio through the month of March. Of the lessons learned during most trips, our greatest was remembering why we live in California in the winter! Ohio was *cold* and toting all the heavy clothes was a huge pain in the neck. However, seeing family was worth it, of course. And Arizona was very pleasant. We were in Phoenix and Yuma with family and friends.

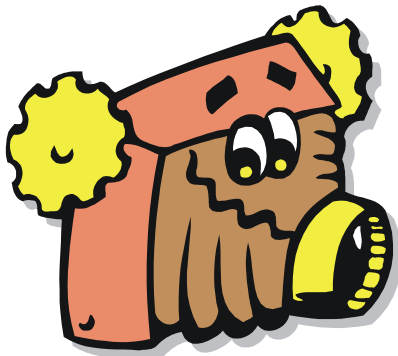
We had a nice trip, but it is soooo good to be home safely back among our family here and our friends within and out of the club.

This month Bill Ball will give a presentation on the GPS and map programs. Hope to see you there,

Judi Ball



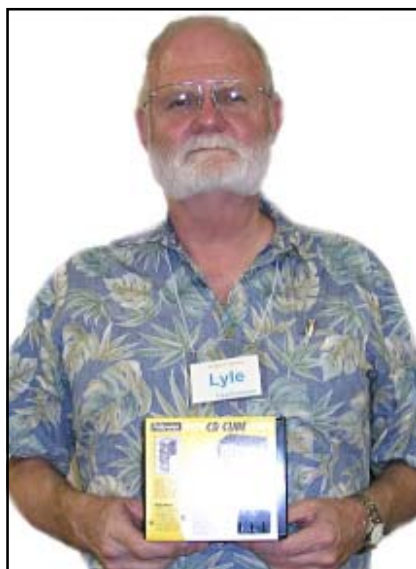
Jane Quinn gave a presentation of the Pro-Gold Program



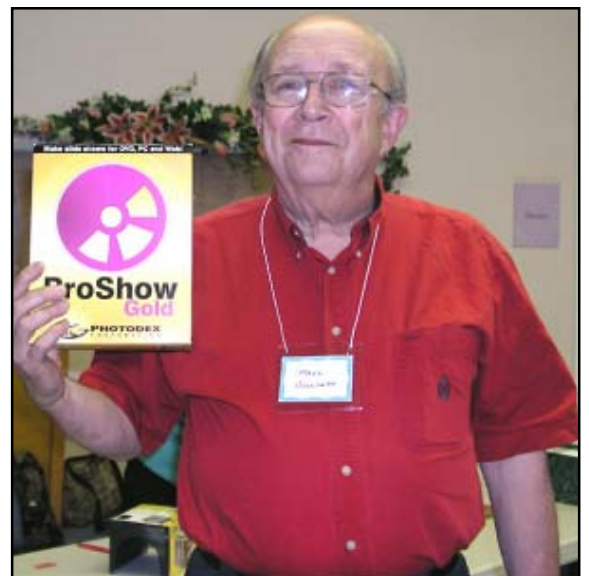
Congratulations To Our Winners



Larry Owings won a Surge Protector



Lyle Van Norman won a CD Holder



Paul Colligan won the ProShow Gold Program

IBM/PCUG MEMBER WEBSITES

DAVE & BECKY HEMP

www.c-zone.net/dochemp/

FRONTIER SENIOR CENTER

Jane Quinn

[www.jett.net/ frontier](http://www.jett.net/frontier)

JACK McAULIFFE

Real Estate Broker

www.realtyphoto.com

KITTYSTONE PERSIANS

Lynn Johanson

kittystone.com

MEXICAN-TOURS

www.mexican-tours.com

Lyle VanNorman

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EnvironmentalMold.com

lyle@EnvironmentalMold.com

Informational site for air Quality.

QUESTIONED DOCUMENT EXAMINATION

Mary Ann Czermak

www.documents-examiner.com

RIVERCITY JAZZ SOCIETY

Joyce Covey

jazzjoy@charter.net

REDDING REAL ESTATE

Rick Goates

www.reddingrealestate.net

RON COLE JR.

www.houseofspecialtygifts.com

Publicize Your WebSite

Here for FREE!

(Members Only Please)

Welcome To New Member

Vivian Cherry

Welcome Renewals

Bob & Estelle Azevedo

Dennis & Jane Bebensee

David Gox

Harry & Nancy Detwiler

Dick Freel

Ken & Marian George

Carol & Harry Hawes

Margot Legendre

Robert Mitchell

William F. Nicol

Nancy Polk

Charlotte Pack

Herb Quick

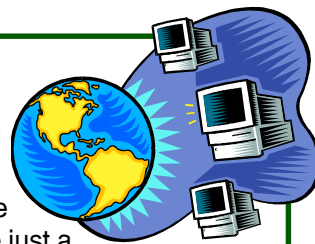
Sharon Stern

Belva Sallivent

The Surfboard

by Dorothy Kirk

IBM/PCUG of Redding, dak75@sbcglobal.net



Sometimes you just can't find the clothing you want at your local shops. This is the time to go online. There are many, many stores that offer clothing online. Below are just a few of them. You will find a wide range of different types of clothing stores as well as the traditional ones. I even threw in a Gothic clothing store for fun. And if you like vintage clothing there's one of these too. Even if you don't intend to buy, it might be fun or interesting just to look at some of these sites.

OVERSTOCK COM http://www.overstock.com/cgi-bin/d2.cgi?PAGE=CATALOG&PRO_SUB_CAT=957&PRO_SSUB_CAT=999 — This site has many pages of items to buy, including men's, women's and children's clothing in many categories. I clicked on Women's Petite and came up with, among other offerings, "Donna Ricco Petite, Violet Sleeveless, Silk Godet Dress. List Price \$138.00. Out Price \$69.99. There are Hot Items and Shop by brand or store, too. Shipping is now \$1.00 per item.

GAP http://secure.www.gap.com/asp/home_gap.htm — You can order men's and women's clothing from a number of departments. Currently their Spring sale is featured. Find what you want by clicking on their search engine by department and item.

COOL OLD STUFF <http://www.coololdstuff.com/showSite26.html> — This site is loaded with links to stores that sell vintage clothing, such as the link 1860-1960.com, Five and Dime Vintage, American Vintage Blues, Clothes Heaven, with Wear It Again Sam's. With these links and many more you can probably find something very close to what you are looking for.

ONLINE CLOTHING RETAILERS <http://www.coololdstuff.com/showSite26.html> — This site is a gold mine of the unusual in clothing. The home page features World sarongs, corsets, custom fitted sportswear, plus size for the woman hunting for designer fashions, custom made pants for men and women. Tuxedos and everything to go with it. Lingerie and leather in all sizes, women's golf and tennis clothing, and much more.

REI.COM <http://www.rei.com/> — Here is everything you need for backpack clothing and gear.

MY CATWALK <http://www.mycatwalk.com.au/fashion/online-clothing-store.html> — "Buying designer women's

clothing online at MYCATWALK is very easy. All ladies' fashion products are accompanied with at least three detailed photographs and sizing charts, together with useful commentary and recommendations from our fashion editors."

TRAVELSMITH <http://www.travel-smith.com/ts/home.jsp> — Going somewhere and need special clothing or need to know what kind of clothing you need? This site has clothing for every occasion for men and women.

WEAR GOOD ORIENT <http://www.travel-smith.com/ts/home.jsp> — If you want oriental clothing this is one online store to shop.

BODEN <http://www.boden.co.uk/col.asp?styid=WK244&segname=Women&segid=6&gpname=Knitwear&desname=Contrast+Trim+Cardigan&gpid=12&gen=1> — This site offers a large selection of clothing for men, women, girls and boys.

ORVIS http://www.orvis.com/store/home_page.asp?bhcp=1 — Another source for travel clothing with an emphasis on special needs such as fly fishing, hunting, country home, and also dogs!

THE BLACK ANGEL <http://uk-shop.the-black-angel.com/enter.html> — All the men's and women's gear for the Gothic dresser. Even if you are not into Gothic clothes you will probably enjoy or be amazed at this site.

YOUR MARKS AND SPENCER <http://www.marksandspencer.com/> — This famous store has been in business for a long time. Now enjoy shopping online with them.

BLAIR <http://www.blair.com> — This familiar online store of women's clothing has been around for years and with good reason. It offers good women's clothing at reasonable prices. There is always a sale of some kind.

Bits and Pieces

by Rush Blodget; IMB/PCUG of Redding, rblodget@snowcrest.net



MYTH TV

This is a rather intriguing new software product that is described by John Dvorak in PC Magazine for March 8, 2005. MythTV is a free software system written by a Silicon Valley software engineer which when combined with various TV tuners, audio, and other cards will turn the ordinary computer into a powerful feature-rich DVR. It can be set to not just skip by commercials in playback, but to not record them at all. He states that it also incorporates MP3/Ogg (Ogg is defined as an open-source, patent-free, professional audio coding and streaming technology) features along with slide shows and Web-TV functionality for the TV set. He did not include illegal features such as DeCSS for ripping DVDs, however, he made the architecture of the program such that it will work with this and other DVD-ripping plug-ins to strip out the code that would normally prevent doing this. MPEG-2 DVDs can be converted to MPEG-4. MPEG-4 is stated to

deliver DVD (MPEG-2) quality video at lower data rates and smaller file sizes and can stream high quality audio and video.

MythTV is Linux-based although a similar program called my-HTPC (my Home Theater Personal Computer) is being developed for Windows. MythTV is currently a do-it-yourself project, but he predicts that eventually packagers will make available pre-built systems that they have bundled together. Further information as well as download sites can be found by searching for "MythTV" in Google. It would, however, seem to require a fair degree of sophistication to set up.

64-BIT CHIPS

AMD released a 64-bit dual-core chip last August beating rival Intel that did not release their 64-bit chip until this past February. A 64-bit operating system is still needed for these chips to function at their maximum power. Such an operating system is scheduled for release this June by Microsoft.

END-USERS-LICENSE-AGREEMENT

I have never taken time to read an end-users-license-agreement. However, James Derk, who writes a computer column for the Scripps-Howard News Service, says he recently read the EULA for AOL's online messenger service and found that America Online has the rights to any content that flows through the service. He quotes the agreement: "You waive any right to privacy. You waive any right to inspect or approve uses of the content or to be compensated for any such uses." It also states that AOL has the right to "reproduce, display, perform, distribute, adapt, and promote" all content distributed across the chat network. He predicts that there will be sufficient opposition to this to require a change in AOL policy.

Factory Reconditioned Products Offer Savings

North American Precip Syndicate, Inc.

(NAPSI)-Consumer electronics that once were new can be made new again and offer consumers considerable savings.

That's the idea behind the market in "open box" and factory reconditioned electronic devices such as computers and personal digital assistants, or PDAs.

Here's how it works. Customers return products for many reasons: a customer may change his or her mind, or not like the product, or have difficulty operating it. Whether it is returned a month later or only the very next day, such an item must be identified as 'reconditioned' or 'refurbished' to be resold.

- Open Box: As the name implies, this refers to a product that someone bought but merely "opened the box," and does not show any signs of wear and tear.

- Customer Returns: This refers to products that the customer opened and may have briefly used, and as a result,

may show a small amount of wear and tear.

Every product targeted for reconditioning must pass a thorough examination. After repairing any defect and sanitizing the product, it is repackaged for sale. Reconditioning may be performed by the original manufacturer or a reputable professional outside firm. All products are returned to like-new or almost new condition.

There are a number of ways to take advantage of this market. In addition to retail outlets there are Web sites that offer these kinds of products at significant savings.

For example, a Web site called Overstock.com offers a wide array of computers and other electronic devices from companies like Palm and Sony at savings of 50% off the original retail price or more.

By visiting the Web site, consumers can compare and research the products

at their own convenience. This can also help to prevent them from purchasing "more computer" or PDA than they need.

If you want to purchase a PC for your young family, keep in mind that small children have modest computing needs. Most children will want to use a PC for interactive games and learning software, neither of which require much computing power or cash.

Overstock.com has been described as an Internet leader for name-brands at clearance prices. In addition to computers, it offers more than 5,000 products, including apparel, audio equipment, books, jewelry and home and garden products.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.overstock.com.

A growing number of consumers are saving money by purchasing factory reconditioned consumer electronics.

Bass's Computing Factoids

by Steve Bass, Contributing Editor, *PC World*; by Steve Bass, author of *PC Annoyances, 2nd Edition*

There are unrelated things I pick up in e-mail that are terrific—but not long enough for an article. Here are a few of them.

TWO TECH SUPPORT CLASSICS

This first alleged tech support transcript just made me LOL. And no, I don't know if it's true, but it sure sounds as if it is...—Steve

I had been doing Tech Support for Hewlett-Packard's DeskJet division for about a month when I had a customer call with a problem I just couldn't solve. She could not print yellow.

All the other colors would print fine, which truly baffled me because the only true colors are cyan, magenta, and yellow. For instance, green is a combination of cyan and yellow, but green printed fine. Every color of the rainbow printed fine except for yellow.

I had the customer change ink cartridges. I had the customer delete and reinstall the drivers. Nothing worked. I asked my coworkers for help; they offered no new ideas.

After over two hours of troubleshooting, I was about to tell the customer to send the printer in to us for repair when she asked quietly, "Should I try printing on a piece of white paper instead of this yellow paper?"

"The doctor insisted that his inkjet cartridge wasn't empty. I decided he was correct."

This one is true. It's from a product manager at Canon who replied to my e-mail and asked to remain anonymous.

Steve, this is a true story from when I was [at the] Canon Printer Division....

One of the things they like you to do is go out to Virginia and sit on the support phones with a tech and go through the experience of solving user issues.

The call I was fortunate enough to be in on came from a doctor who refused to believe that his ink cartridge was empty (Sometimes, even though the cartridge is empty, you can still see ink in there). After going through all the cleaning techniques, the tech reassured the doctor that it was most likely empty and that he would have to purchase a refill cartridge.

Twenty minutes later, the doctor called back and asked us for our fax number. A few minutes later, here comes a strange view of the ink cartridge proving his point. He had actually taken the ink cartridge and X-rayed it!

P.S. We sent him a complimentary set of ink.

FREE TECH MAGAZINE

I recently received the premier issue of TechNet Magazine, The Microsoft Journal for IT Professionals. His first magazine included a URL to share with colleagues for a free subscription at <http://technetmagsubs.com>. If you're not an IT professional, just pretend to be one—they won't know the difference. (And yes, ethical issues aside, you'll have to lie when answering some of the questions.)

AMAZON'S CUSTOMER SERVICE

Have you ever been frustrated trying to find someone—anyone—to deal with when resolving an Amazon order? Here's a link with contact details rarely seen on Amazon's website. That's right—phone numbers for customer service. There's also a nifty rant that'll make your blood boil as well as contact info for eBay's customer service. <http://snipurl.com/bqjb3>

HELLO, DILBERT?

Some people shouldn't be allowed to use computers. Here are two examples extracted from actual e-mail. —Steve

A buddy of mine said she just showed her boss how to minimize an open app. She was astonished that he's been closing each app whenever he wanted to look at another one. It was a real revelation for him! (And to think he's the one making the big bucks.)—Steve

You think that's bad? The head of a legal firm where I maintain their network.... Big boss complained his WinXP computer would always "lock up".... went to his office to find he had ACT open 5 times...thought the "-" button closed the application. He then re-opened it the next time he needed it.... —Bill

MAKES ME WANT TO HEAD FOR WENDYS

This has been floating around e-mail for about six months. It's hard to tell if it's true – or just funny. —Steve

Recently, when I went to McDonalds I saw on the menu that you could have an order of 6, 9 or 12 Chicken McNuggets. I asked for a half dozen nuggets.

"We don't have no half dozen nuggets," said the teenager at the counter.

"You don't? I replied.

"We only have six, nine, or twelve," was the reply.

"So I can't order a half-dozen nuggets, but I can order six?" I asked.

"That's right. So I shook my head and ordered six McNuggets."

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World, a 23 year veteran of PIBMUG, and a founding member of APCUG. He's also the author of the second edition of PC Annoyances: How to Fix the Most Annoying Things about Your Personal Computer, O'Reilly Press. Check out a sample chapter at http://snurl.com/sample_annoyed2. It's available on Amazon at <http://snurl.com/annoyed2>.



PC WORLD HOME OFFICE

Many of you have asked if I could start sending links to my PC World articles, something I used to do. Here ya go:

Supercharge Your Software: Windows Wonders

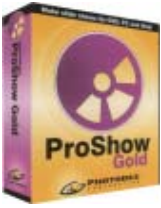
I wrote the Windows portion of this article.

<http://snipurl.com/supercharge>

Hassle-Free PC

Add Zip to Your Internet Connection: Save time with no-brainer tweaks, cheap fixes, and smart download tools.

http://snipurl.com/HO_0505



PhotoDex ProShow Gold Ver 2.5

by Jane Quinn, PC Users Group Of Redding, qjq@charter.net

Pro Show Gold Ver 2.5 upgrade is a slide show and presentation software package. The free service to post my slideshow on their website was a great attraction. Their software let's you create the illusion of a movie with your still images if you do not have a video file. Or if you do have a video file you can post this on the internet. Getting people to do something other than e-mail their virtual images is an ever increasing challenge. However, Photodex has made this very easy. I have used and created projects with the following products; MS Movie-Maker, PowerPoint 2003, PhotoStory, Roxio's Suite ver 6 and 7, and Adobe's Pinnacle Gold. So I was completely prepared to use this program.

WHY PROSHOW GOLD?

The reason I chose Proshow Gold was to create a video that played from within a website for my computer group. We had just completed a DVD movie for a community project when we realized to reach a greater audience we needed a website. And we wanted the website to look exactly like the DVD movie we have been distributing around town. But our needs are immediate, so it had to be quick and easy. This is the strong point for using ProShow Gold. Its WebShow feature lets you easily post your slideshow. There is no third party software. Simply use this website posting feature within the program. If you are acquainted with photo sharing for free websites, such as Snapfish, Flickr, Sony's ImageStation, or Kodak, this software is similar. But Photodex software is so much better. Your slideshow could be a composite of still images or movies complete with your selection of background music, titles, and text caption on an image. Whereas the album creation products mentioned earlier do not include adding music or videos. With Photodex ProShow Gold your photos can have movement giving the illusion of a movie, much more than a slideshow. What you create on the website, will be an exact duplicate of your other formats, DVD, EXE, CDR, SCR, or VCD. It will be the same show you play on the living room DVD player or any computer. This product's real distinction is the multitude

of formats that can be created from one project. Including the PC Autorun Option which let's you add a PC executable to your DVD that will automatically play when the DVD is loaded into a computer. Users won't need DVD software on their computer to view your production. This is an amazing feature!

OTHER OUTSTANDING FEATURES ABOUT THIS PRODUCT

For those new to slideshow projects there are similar operations and tasks as in any application. For example, desktop publishing, creating music audio CD, etc. If you think in terms of being a Hollywood movie producer you will get the idea. You have a story line, (the plot) background music, text captions, movie title, and with DVD movies you have Menus. Pro Show gold has all these key features for making slideshows, so as you construct the show you can also view it. There are many transition effects (a visual effect between images), record-a-voice over for your slide show, e-mail EXE the show, timing control for images, music, etc.

Control audio timing, fade in, fade out, and more

Real-time previewing

Add multiple captions to each slide, set fonts, sizes, colors, shadows and more.

One-click audio sync automatically times your show to music.

Sync slides to a specific sound track.

Intuitive timing recorder lets you set slide times as you listen to your soundtrack.

Easily add blank slides for titles and credits

Include your own intro presentation to brand your shows.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES IN COMPARISON TO OTHER SLIDESHOW SOFTWARE

This product allows you to add motion (*Ken Burns effect*) to any slide. This will give your viewers the illusion of a video. Also you can Pan, Zoom and rotate your images.

Other unique attributes to this product.

Add PC auto run capability to any video CD.

Add global show captions that appear on every slide, perfect for copyrights, filenames and more.

Customize backgrounds with colors and images

Fix mistakes with the unlimited undo and redo function

PC Autorun Option (mentioned earlier) allows DVDs to play on computers without DVD software.

BEST NEW FEATURES

The added tool "the Light Box Slide Viewer is a super help! You can easily arrange a large number of slides using the Light Box View. Prior to this it was cumbersome to maneuver within the StoryLine. That single row at the bottom of the screen just kept growing ever longer. If you had a large show you had to keep scrolling to find your reference point. The Slide Viewer floats anywhere on the program's screen and even can be dragged to the desktop! It is absolutely perfect for multi-tasking. Its toolbar contains all the slide option tools, so you can quickly get to adjusting your slides. You can easily arrange a large number of slides using the Light Box View.

They also greatly improved the help manual in their new version. The older version was a poor representation of a manual. Of course, we expect a super quality help resource with our products because no one prints manuals anymore.

WEB SERVICE

There are two options to posting your finished show. You can use their website, uploading your streaming show quickly from within the program. Or you can use this product to create the html code and insert it into your existing website. Friends and family can view your show without joining or signing up for anything.

This is a great product. With Photo Dex you will be able to produce shows that play exactly the same on the Web, your PC, or your TV.

File formats supported are, DVD HQ, LP, SLP, SP, VCD, SVCD, XVCD, XSVCD, and CD.

System Requirements

MS XP, 2000, ME, 98, 95

Pentium 600 mhz, or better

64 MB memory

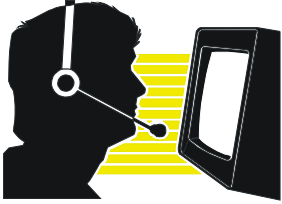
CD-R/RW, DVD R/RW

800x600 HI Color or 24 BIT display

30 mb hard disc space

How to Report Tech Problems to Get Answers

By Gabe Goldberg, APCUG Advisor and Columnist, AARP Computers and Technology Website. ggoldberg@apcug.net



Using computers and technology means having questions and problems. But you can't get answers and solutions without asking the *right* questions. A little preparation can be a big help in solving annoyances, mysteries, and disasters.

How to Report Tech Problems to Get Answers

The more we use computers and technology, the more questions we have and problems we need solved. But it's hard to get answers and solutions without asking the *right* questions and describing the problem at hand. We're specific when visiting the doctor or auto mechanic: we describe what's wrong and when it began. We may even imitate the noise our car makes for the mechanic.

But when faced with computer oddities and malfunctions we sometimes revert to unhelpful generalities such as "My email is broken" or "My printer stopped working" or "I get an error when I start Word". Problem reports such as these don't allow diagnosing a problem; at best, they elicit a response like "Tell me more."

It saves time to collect as much information as possible before asking for help. As a bonus, gathering problem details and considering relevant factors can often allow solving problems oneself!

Just as a doctor or mechanic needs details, someone analyzing a computer problem must know the environment in which it occurred. So describe your computer (hardware/software/networking/application/etc.) to provide context. Mention your operating system (Windows 98/ME/XP, Mac OS, Linux, etc.), what version of what application failed (Internet Explorer 6.0, MS Word XP, etc.), what Internet connection is used (dial or cable/DSL), and any other details that may help.

Don't omit details — it's better to have too much information than to miss a crucial factor. Sometimes it's worth capturing screen images showing a

problem; tools for doing this will be described in a future article.

Other important steps in describing symptoms and getting help are:

Distinguish facts from guesses and interpretations.

If an error message was issued, write it down, word-for-word. Then check it for accuracy. (Often searching Google for the error message text or a distinctive chunk — entered in quotation marks — will yield information on a problem.)

Note what you did just before the problem occurred and whether anything else odd happened since you last rebooted and before the problem at hand.

Mention whether the problem happened before, and if so how you resolved it.

List whatever (hardware, software, settings, network, *anything*) changed recently.

Explain if you attempted to solve the problem and what resulted. (Remember that rebooting often cures problems, though without explaining them.)

Note where you've already looked for information (product manual or Help, company Web site or FAQ, etc.).

Reread your query imagining you know nothing about the problem except what's in the query. Add what's missing that someone else needs to know in order to help.

To help friends or service personnel respond to your question — and to let the question be filed and found — use a meaningful Subject line, not Help!, Urgent, or Question. Describe the context (e.g., Windows XP) and the problem (e.g., Windows Update never finds new patches).

To help your helper help you —

Be clear about your overall goal, don't focus on an intermediate step you think is necessary — you may distract someone into addressing how you're trying to do something rather than what you actually want to do.

Ask for help in the right/best place. AARP's Computers and Technology Web board <<http://community.aarp.org/rp-computers/start>> hosts many people

with deep and diverse experience who are most generous with their time offering help and advice. And the Internet hosts thousands of mailing lists and newsgroups specializing in every imaginable topic. Searching for the best place to pose a question will get you better and more complete answers and avoid your seeming like a novice for posting out-of-place queries.

As you work with an individual or a group, collaborate — don't try to overpower them. Be respectful, not belligerent; don't make them feel stupid even if you feel they are. They may have missed a detail, you may not have conveyed the whole story.

If you're working with someone at a company help desk, don't try to "pull rank" based on age or experience or professional credentials. Mention past interactions with the company, emphasizing positive outcomes.

Finally, a longish document from Eric Raymond — an influential leader of the "open source" (shared software development) movement — at <http://www.catb.org/~esr/faqs/smart-questions.html> provides useful tips, though it's a little too harsh in places for my taste. But his comments on how to ask questions and where to seek help are interesting and helpful.

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The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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(For general information call any Officer or Director listed on Page 2)

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2. Enjoy more of that investment by learning more about it.
3. Share tips and tricks, as well as new and old ideas.
4. Become exposed to a variety of new hardware and software without sales pressure.
5. Receive an informative monthly newsletter.
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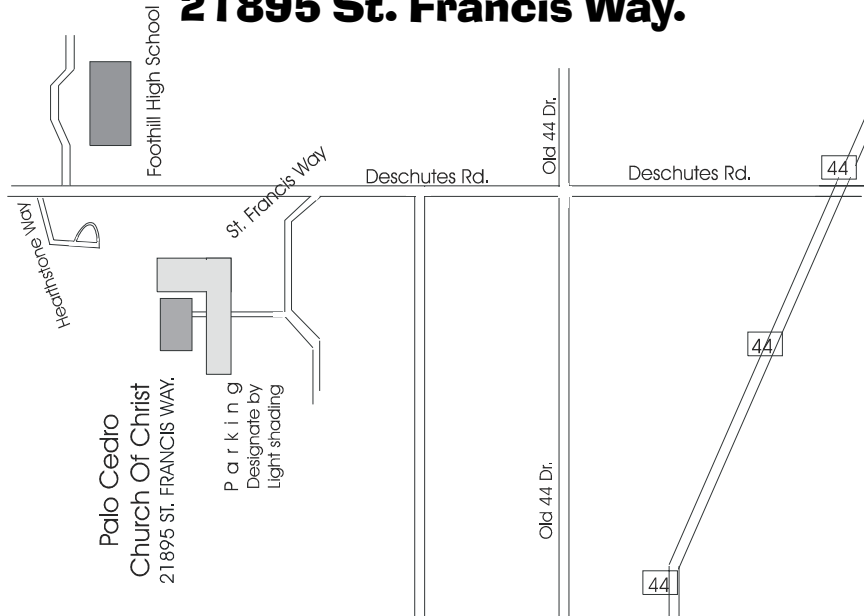
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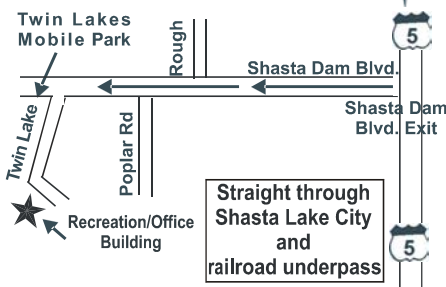
Check out the SIGs on this page, and go visit a meeting to see if they might fit your computer needs.

CUG'S MEETING PLACE Palo Cedro Church Of Christ 21895 St. Francis Way.

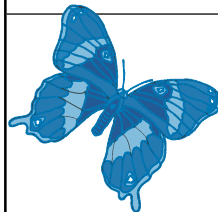


Windows & More SIG

Monday 10 AM
 April 11, 18
 May 2, 9, 16, 30



Bill Ball: 275-4632
 bcard9@charter.net



DTP & Graphics Art SIG

Monday 1:30 PM
 April 11, 18
 May 2, 9, 16, 30

Please see map to left for meeting place.

Judi Ball 275-4632
 jebed@charter.net

Bring paper and pen.



Multi-Media SIG

Includes Digital Cameras, Burning Music CDs, and creating QuickTime Movies.

Saturday 10 AM
 April 23

Churn Creek Golf Course Meeting Room; 7335 Churn Creek Rd.

Jane Quinn 365-0825
 jqquinn@charter.net