

MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

Volume 2010, Number 09

<http://cugr.apcug.org/>

September 2010

YOUR C.U.G.R. PRESENTS

4th Tuesday, September 28, 2010



Dave Bartle and Robert Harrington, representing Shasta.com which features "High Speed Internet Access" will discuss WiFi and also how to network computers in order to share information and peripherals in your home or small business. And they will participate in a Q and A about Internet Service Providers in general.

Door Prizes



1. Cirago 60GB Hard Drive



2. Narrow 4-Drawer White Office Cabinet



3. Scan Disk 8GB Jump Drive



One free ticket to each member at the door!

6 PM Club Business & Presentation

Sign in at the Greeting Table and pick up your name tag and please leave it in the Tag Box when the meeting is over. Also please stay and help reset the tables to the Library's original arrangement. Thank you.



CUGR Calendar

CUGR Board Meeting
3:15 PM Monday, Oct 4
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

MULTI-MEDIA
10 AM, Saturday
September 25

WINDOWS & MORE
11:30 AM, Wednesday
October 6 Tentively
See Page 5, Editor's Corner

DTP SIG
2:10 PM, Wednesday
October 6 Tentively
See Page 5, Editor's Corner

See back page
for more SIG information

GENERAL MEETINGS ARE
at the Redding Library
100 Parkview Ave,
off Cypress.

OFFICIAL WEBSITE IS
<http://cugr.apcug.org/>

For more information
call any Board member
listed on Page 2.

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Members volunteering
to help members!

Club Information

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<http://cugr.apcug.org/>

Club Mentors & Sponsors

New Users
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ricerl@snowcrest.net

MS Windows
Photo Delux
222-1781
daroldwright@yahoo.com

New Users
Free Library PC Classes
Spread Sheets
Sfskill@shasta.com

MS Windows
Hardware, Software
98, ME, XP, Vista bcard9@charter.net

DTP
Graphic Prgs
Photo Editing jebed@charter.net

Judi Ball
275-4632

MS Word, PowerPoint,
Movie Maker 2, DVD Prgs. 365-0825

Digital Image Pro qjquinn@charter.net

Sponsors

Electronic Recycling For Charitable Situations:
Bruce Roth and Darold Wright
3300 Veda Street, Rdg. 245-0500
(no microwaves or large appliances)

ET Phone Home!

by *Berry F. Phillips, a Member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City*
May 2010 Issue of The Monitor
www.ccokc.org/bfpdata@1access.net

SETI, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, is an exploratory science that searches for evidence of life in the universe. The current understanding of life's origin on Earth suggests that given a suitable environment and sufficient time, life will develop on other planets. Of course, whether evolution will give rise to intelligent, technological civilizations is open to speculation. SETI has developed signal-processing technology to detect alien civilizations which may offer our best opportunity for discovering extraterrestrial life in the near future.

From 1994 - 2004, SETI was funded entirely from individuals and grants from private foundations. In 2005, a NASA grant was awarded for work on signal detection for the Allen Telescope Array. Donations and non-governmental grants still comprise the vast majority of funding.

The Allen Telescope Array (ATA) is a "Large Number of Small Dishes" (LNSD) array now operational and was designed to be highly effective for simultaneous surveys of conventional radio astronomy projects and search for extraterrestrial intelligence observations. The first phase of the ATA now operational was funded by Paul Allen, the cofounder of Microsoft, which has 42 antennas approximately twenty foot in diameter. The Allen Array is located at Hatfield Creek Observatory and is a joint project of the SETI Institute and the Radio Astronomy Lab of the University of California Berkeley. Additional phases projected, depending on funding, will eventually be developed to 350 dishes greatly expanding research capabilities. The ATA will then be able to monitor a very wide range of radio frequencies larger than any other single radio telescope or radio telescope array.

SETI@home was launched in May 1999 to analyze radio telescope signals. A giant virtual super computer composed of hundreds of thousands

Continued on Page 8

Board of Officers and Directors

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Motherboard Newsletter Policies and Deadlines

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 incurred 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.

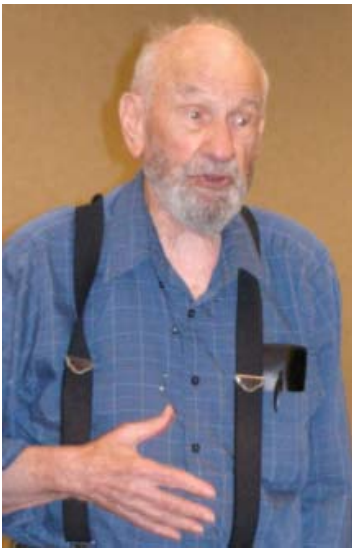
Article Submissions: All articles and reviews must be submitted to J. Ball by the **Monday of the monthly Board meeting** (see Page 1 for date.) Sorry, no exceptions.

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

Annual July Ice Cream Social



Jeanie Richardson and Lyle Van Norman



Dave Cox entertained us with some great jokes. Thanks Dave!



Folks lined up for treats!

About Our Social

Lyle Van Norman provided the Ice Cream and fixin's as he has done the past two annual parties. Thank you, Lyle, we all certainly enjoyed your efforts.

Jeanie Richardson planned and worked with Lyle, while she, Carolyn Bowles, Eugenia Goodman and others helped and brought supplies bought by the club.



President Mike Doyle & Past President Lyle Van Norman



Welcome Members And Renewals

There have been no new members, nor renewals over the summer.

A Great Writer

There was once a young man who, in his youth, professed his desire to become a great writer. When asked to define "great" he said, "I want to write stuff that the whole world will read, stuff that people will react to on a truly emotional level, stuff that will make them scream, cry, howl in pain and anger!" He now works for Microsoft, writing computer error messages for us.

About Motherboard Newsletter Contributors

Be sure to checkout our contributors on Page 11.

These contributors help greatly to pay for the functioning of our club. As club members please support their businesses. Visit or call them and be a patron if possible, remembering to tell them you saw their business card in the club's newsletter.

Also, if you have (or know of) a local business that would like to advertise in the Motherboard, please give them the editor's phone number for the details of becoming a Contributor.

Editor, Judi Ball 275-4632
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CUGR MEMBER WEBSITES

MEXICAN-TOURS
www.mexican-tours.com
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Protecting The Computing Endpoint

NAPSA, North American Precip Syndicate (Association)

Information technology is everywhere. At home, at work, at school, at the corner store, in coffee shops, libraries, airports and everywhere in between. In fact, advances in information technology and the Internet have made the world a highly interconnected place where people across continents can communicate and transact business in near real time.

And new computing devices make it even easier. On-the-go professionals take their laptops on the road and hook up to different wireless networks to work on business and personal tasks. With an Internet connection and their laptop, they can bank online, check stocks, catch up on news, shop for a new ring tone for their phone, check work and personal e-mail, play games, download music and more.

Smartphones, portable music players, thumb drives, and other peripheral devices also make computing convenient and simple.

The trouble is, these devices—called "endpoints" in technology vernacular—also represent potential targets for hackers and their malicious code. By hitching a ride on a vulnerable laptop, smart-phone or even a home desktop computer, hackers not only gain access to the information that resides on the hacked system, but they can also sneak onto a corporate network when the unsuspecting user connects from home, the road or elsewhere.

These possibilities are causing businesses of all sizes to re-evaluate how they deal with such devices. Outfitting each device with individual security products is not an option. On one hand, today's threats are so sophisticated that they require specific security technologies. For example, viruses and Trojan horses are stopped by anti-viruses, while spyware and rootkits are addressed by anti-spyware. Worms can be stopped by a firewall, while intrusion prevention technology can thwart

buffer overflow and so-called "zero-day" exploits. Identity theft can be managed by device control solutions, and network access control tools can prevent unprotected endpoints from connecting to the company network.

On the other hand, installing such a collection of products would likely over-burden any device and lead to incompatibility problems, management challenges and so on.

Fortunately, there's a better way. Software vendors are

introducing an innovative new tool that combines all of these essential security capabilities in a single, integrated solution. Not only does this next generation tool deliver a complete range of security technologies, but it also works together with technology that ensures that every device connecting to the company network is properly protected.

As a result, end users and businesses benefit. End users benefit by knowing they are not the unwitting conduit through which malicious code can enter their company network.

And businesses benefit by knowing that any laptop, smartphone, desktop or other device that interacts with the network has been audited for compliance with security standards and is only allowed access once it meets such standards.

Perhaps one of the most compelling aspects of this advanced new tool is its remediation capabilities; that is, any device that falls short of the established security requirements is brought up to standards—automatically.

The security and management implications of such a solution are significant, as businesses and their employees finally have a simple yet reliable way to protect valuable information assets while leveraging their computing devices of choice anytime, anywhere.

For more information about protecting your computing endpoints, visit www.symantec.com.

**What Are Endpoints?
Smartphones, portable
music players, thumb
drives, and any other
peripheral devices are
Endpoints.**

Bits And Pieces

by Rush Blodget; IMB/PCUG of Redding, rmaxtwo@charter.net

RELATIVE COST OF COMPUTERS, MEMORY, DISKETTES, AND PRINTERS IN 1977

I recently ran across a price schedule from 1977 for the IBM 32 Computer. The purchase price was listed as \$39,390 with 16K of Memory, a 5 megabyte hard drive, and a 155 character per minute printer. To rent a similar unit with a 40 characters per second printer, a 5 MB hard drive and 16K of memory would be \$880 per month. Yes, that is correct – 5 MB hard drive and 16K of memory!

Each additional 8K of memory would cost \$102 per month. The maximum memory available was 32K and the maximum disk capacity available was 13.7 MB. The floppy diskettes were priced at \$650/ per hundred. Rental on a management program was priced at \$60/ month plus a monthly maintenance charge of \$15/unit.

By comparison a new desktop com-puter that was for sale locally last month for \$287 had a 500 GB hard drive and a 2 GB of memory. A one Tera-byte external hard drive lists for \$120. This would be fraction of a penny/month rental at today's prices. You do the math! Don't we wish that this type of price reduction prevailed on other products?

Keyboard Shortcuts: I commented on a few of these commands before, however, I thought that it might be worthwhile to mention a few of the more useful ones again. HELP = F1; Move to the End of Document = CTRL + F; Save the Current Page = CTRL + S; Print to Current page = CTRL + P; Add the Current Page to Your Favorites = CTRL + D; Open Favorites = CTRL + I.; Open a New Window: CTL + N.



Editor's Corner

Windows & More and DTP SIG will resume in October "as requested by students." All this means is that if six or more students call by Monday on the Wednesday of either the first and third week of each month (or both), we will hold class as usual that week.

This will make it easier for us, as well as those who drive a good distance to attend in Shasta Lake, because we will be able to alert students by Tuesday by e-mail that classes will be held on Wednesday.

We request that you call versus e-mailing to assure that we get the information in time. If we are not home, please leave a clear message with your name on our answering machine that we will hear.

Also, if you are interested in Win 7, please allow Bill time to get the club's laptop from Jane Quinn in Anderson.

Thank you all, Judi Ball

Dick's Clicks

by Dick Ramette, President, Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ, Summer 2010 Issue, Green Bytes, Rwramette@mindspring.com

This month I clicked on "e-mail etiquette" in Google, and found 163,000 hits, with myriad suggestions for doing the right thing. I realize that many of you do not need this, but others, including my own kith and kin, should take note of these pet peeves. Please take the quiz:

1. A friend e-mails you with the subject "Meg's birthday," and attaches three nice pics of the little sweetie with her cake and candles. Do you immediately reply and comment on the happy occasion, leaving the subject unchanged?
2. A month later, when you e-mail this same friend about your successful hip replacement, and you use Reply to get started, do you use something relevant, like "I'm so Hippy," instead of lazily leaving "Meg's birthday" as the subject line?
3. When a friend sends you anything welcome, do you give them the courtesy of a prompt reply/thank you, knowing that they'll appreciate that you received it and cared enough to respond?
4. When you Reply, do you delete all traces of



the incoming e-mail, especially any pics or a long attachment, thus saving clutter on your friend's hard disk which, after all, already has a copy of what was sent?

5. Someone emails you a scary warning of impending doom if you get an e-mail with a certain clickable link. Or, it might be an amazing come on, saying that Microsoft will pay you cash for every person to whom you relay this message, so they can check a new method of e-mail tracking. You are begged to forward this to everyone in your address book. You notice that this e-mail has already been successively forwarded several times, each time accumulating long visible lists of e-mail addresses of previous recipients.

Do you take time to check a hoax or urban legend web site, such as www.snopes.com or www.scambusters.org, to see if this message has validity? Most likely you'll find that it has been debunked, perhaps still making the rounds after several years. Do you spare others needless anxiety and

wasted time by simply deleting such e-mails? They're meant to deceive gullible readers, which is rather funny given that "gullible" is not even in the dictionary.

6. When you Forward an e-mail that is legit, perhaps a collection of cute rattlesnake pics, do you delete any previously-accumulated e-mail addresses? When you write to multiple e-mail addresses, do you Send using BCC (blind carbon copies)? In both cases, it's a matter of protecting e-mail address privacies.
 7. For all e-mails, before clicking on Send, do you read your composition to find typos, poor phrasing, bad punctuation and misspelled words? Do you avoid all upper-case words except when you want to be read as SHOUTING? Do you minimize those !!!!s? It's all a matter of caring, courtesy and competence.
 8. Did you get a perfect score, without "No" answers to any of the questions?
- Thought of the Month: "Type unto others as you would have them type unto you."

Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by SIG Leader Jane Quinn, jqquinn7427@gmail.com



Weekly S.I.G. Group meetings are every Thursday at the Senior Center in Anderson from 1- 3 pm. Only members may use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movie projects.

Our monthly Multi-Media SIG will be on the Saturday before our club's general meeting, at my home from 10 am to noon. For directions contact me at jqquinn7427@gmail.com or phone 365-0825.

I resumed my weekly class on Thursday September 16th, and the Multi-Media SIG will resume on September 25.

Hope to see you there!

This And That

by Elizabeth B. Wright, Contributor to the Computer Club of

Oklahoma City Newsletter - www.ccokc.org, wright599new@sbcglobal.net

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You never know what your program will remember when you close it.

For that reason, if the last file you used in the program happened to be on removable media which has been detached from the computer, you might face a real problem the next time you turn on your computer. So, before terminating whatever program is using a file located on the removable media, CLOSE the file located on that media. Next, still in the program you have been using, locate on your internal hard disk any file which that program will recognize. Open it. You don't have to work on the file, just open it and close it so that the last file used by the program was from the hard disk. You don't necessarily have to do any editing of the file, but you can re-save it as an added step to help the program remember where it found the last opened file, or you can just close it without re-saving it. On my C:\drive I keep a text file created in MS Notepad titled freecell. You guessed it, that is where I save a list of the games I have failed to win (in other words, LOST). It isn't particularly important, so if it somehow becomes corrupted or deleted, it can always be replaced with new information. This file is easily accessed and opened, after which, for a little added security, I re-save it before closing it.

Hopefully this satisfies the computers lust for usable information. I have spent too much time thinking a program had taken a permanent dive before remembering that the last work I did before

turning off the machine was on a file located on a floppy disk, a camera memory card (either in a card reader or in the camera itself), or from some other form of removable media no longer accessible by the computer. If a file can no longer be physically accessed, many programs go into an endless loop trying to find it, causing your program to appear to be failing.

If you are lucky, using every trick you can think of, you might get the program to respond to a command to open a file on the hard disk. My all-time-favorite, Paint Shop Pro went to a "White Screen Of Death" recently every time I tried to use it. When my brain's memory kicked in I remembered the last thing I had done before closing PSP earlier was to download pictures from my camera's memory card. The memory card had been in a card reader and was removed to put it back in the camera AFTER I closed PSP. Downloading the camera photos was the last work I did before closing PSP. When next opening the program and getting that "WSOD" (see above), I found that even though various messages told me the program was not responding, the mouse would still operate and I was able to get "File/Open/etc.etc." to open a photo located on my hard drive. Problem solved, at least for that incident.

Of course, you can never count on anything happening exactly the same way twice. So maybe, instead of "Death" for PSP it should just be "White Screen Of Coma." But your program might just stop working with no change in the screen at all. Quoting one of our knowledgeable members, "it all depends" on how the programmers wrote it.

Have You Given ID Thieves Permission?

(NewsUSA) If you, your family members or anyone with whom you do business shares music, photos, or documents online, identity thieves could be downloading your information — including your Social Security number, home address and health information — legally.

In any given second, nearly 22 million people around the globe are on peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing networks, where they download and swap movies, software and documents over the Internet. But users of file-sharing networks can expose the contents of entire hard drives to everyone else on the network.

In April 2009, the Today Show found 25,800 student loan applications, over 150,000 tax returns and nearly 626,000 credit reports, just by searching P2P networks.

Antivirus software protects your computer from viruses, but it can't stop thieves from accessing your computer if you've given them permission via P2P file-sharing networks. And while you can stop using P2P networks, you can't control others — your doctor or the teller at your bank could be file-sharing without your knowledge.

The Federal Trade Commission recently warned nearly 100 organizations, including companies, schools and local governments, that they had leaked their customers' and employees' personal information onto online file-sharing networks. The information found included Social Security numbers, health information and drivers' licenses — more than enough information for any identity thief to steal your identity.

What can help put a stop to these online data breaches? The LifeLock Personal Breach Detection Service actively searches file-sharing networks worldwide for your personal information. When a leak is detected, LifeLock alerts you with specific details and then takes action to help you shut down the breach of information.

LifeLock also alerts you to other potential identity threats, patrols over 10,000 criminal Web sites for illegal selling of your information, helps cancel or replace the contents of your stolen wallet (cash, pictures, and other monies excluded) and so much more — giving you the peace of mind that your good name is protected.

For more information: www.LifeLock.com/p2p.

More Annual Social Photos



Continued on Page 7

BeWares!

by Berry F. Phillips, Member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City, www.ccokc.org, wijames@sbcglobal.net

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The wares have often perplexed computer users with numerous decisions regarding software. The multitude of wares have been even more confusing. Comware is commercial software which generally has more "bells and whistles" but requires the highest financial expenditure without the option to try the software in advance. Trialware is usually characterized on the Internet as a free download for a limited time but requires a purchase to continue using the software. Shareware is also free to download but often has features turned off or has an expiration date unless you purchase the software. Trialware and Shareware do offer an opportunity to use the software before making the decision to purchase. Freeware is free for personal use on the Internet but it may contain adware, viruses, or be poor software. Further, the marketing promotion of the wares can be even more misleading, causing you to download and then delete software that you thought was freeware when you discover it is, in fact, pay ware.

The world of wares can be very frustrating as well as expensive to the computer user. One can spend considerable time, frustration, and even expense downloading and deleting various wares on the Internet. Beware, retailers will not accept returned comware after it has been opened for a money back guarantee. Relax, my holiday gift to my readers is a solution to the problem that I have used for several years, saving me considerable time and money! However, I have had to endure personal comments from some of my fellow computer users that I am "cheap!" Since my ancestry is Scottish who are known for being thrifty, I do not consider that comment an insult. However, I do prefer the use of the word "conservative" to the rather blunt, "cheap."

Excluding my operating system, I have nothing but freeware downloaded from the Internet on my system! Aha, you are thinking, but what about ad-

ware, viruses, or poor freeware, and the considerable time in downloading and deleting it takes to find the best freeware on the Internet? There are several sites that contain only freeware. However, I recommend Gizmo's Freeware site because I have used it for several years and found it to be very effective in reviewing freeware and efficient to use in going quickly via links to safe and secure freeware sites for downloading. I am reluctant to recommend other sites that I have not used for purposes of this article.

Gizmo's Freeware is easy to use and makes it very simple to locate the best freeware on the Internet because it is extensively reviewed before it is recommended. Until July 2008 Gizmo was the editor of "Support Alert," a highly recommended technical newsletter that was distributed to over 150,000 subscribers. The site evolved from his highly popular list of the "46 Best-ever Freeware Utilities." The site grew well beyond 46 and reached the point that it could not be maintained by one person. Today, the site has grown into a kind of Wikipedia for Freeware utilizing contributions of dozens of volunteer editors who edit and moderate suggestions from thousands of site visitors. As a result, the range of free software covered by the site is ever increasing and the quality of the reviews are ever improving. Gizmo's Freeware has, in a real sense, become the "Wikipedia for Freeware." I strongly suggest you check your freeware on your system against the recommendations of the best and consider downloading the best.

The primary purpose of Gizmo's Freeware is to make it easy to select the best freeware product for your particular needs. The best freeware programs are as good or better than their commercial counterparts but finding the most appropriate programs can be challenging. There are dozens of freeware download sites but few of these actually help you select the best program for your needs. The site has no downloads just honest advice and useful guidance. Links are provided where you can safely and securely download the product you want. Furthermore, you will know that what you have selected is

the best available. Gizmo's Freeware is easy to use and will save you time, money, and lots of frustration!

BE SURE TO BOOKMARK GIZMO'S FREEWARE BECAUSE YOU WILL USE IT FREQUENTLY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS — SAVING YOU MONEY, TIME, AND LOTS OF STRESS:

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/>

ET PHONE HOME!

Continued from Page 2

of Internet-connected computers harnessing their spare power, via a screensaver, was created in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. You can use your computer in this exciting research and join some 5.2 million users worldwide by downloading <http://setiathome.berkeley.edu/>

In 1977, *Contact* (a motion picture), starring Jodie Foster, was based on a book by Carl Sagan that his wife finished after his death. *Contact* was based on SETI research. SETI Institute supports the Carl Sagan Center for the Study of Life in the Universe. The center directed, by Dr. Frank Drake, brings together leading researchers in a field often called "astrobiology," the study of life in the universe. "Our team focuses on a wide set of disciplines ranging from observing and modeling the precursors of life in the depths of outer space to studies of Earth, where we are attempting to learn more about how life began and how it may diverse forms have survived and evolved." How did life begin on Earth? How many stars have planets and how many of these planets might support life? Scientists in the SETI Institute's Carl Sagan Center for the Study of Life in the Universe explores these and other fundamental questions through various projects and research into a field often known as astrobiology.

While no evidence to date has been received of an advanced civilization, research at SETI is intensifying due to continued technological developments. In 1982, in the motion picture *ET, The Extra-Terrestrial*, directed by Steven Spielberg, we learned that ET phones home. When ET phones, SETI will be listening!

Creative Griping Makes Friends And Brings Rewards

by Gabe Goldberg, Computers and Publishing, Inc., Slickdeals@gabegold.com

In a perfect world, there'd be no problems with hardware, software, or services; businesses would be fully staffed with articulate human beings ready to accommodate all requests, and every product would meet or exceed customer expectations.

But that's not how things work on planet Earth in 2010. Instead, things break quickly or are badly designed; customer service is outsourced to far-away lands; and even when they're accessible, company staff often isn't responsive.

So what to do? Nobody I know is cut out for frontier living, self-sufficiency, and subsistence farming. That means we're all making the best of living in our techno-fragile and sometimes irritating culture. So let's have at it.

First, when life's little outrages intrude, avoid the temptation to accept them as unavoidable — and, worse, unfixable. Just as Slickdeals tips help you find bargains, a few techniques and some practice can remedy a bad situation or even turn it pleasant.

STAY CALM AND BE CONVINCING

Complaining courteously to the right person with a specific remedy in mind can be rewarding. If a company Web site has a "Contact us" link, start there with an email or telephone connection. Be polite, identify yourself, mention how you're connected to the organization (current or potential customer, etc.), and describe your dissatisfaction.

If you're always happy after your initial dialogue with a company, you're a unique individual, and you can stop reading now!

Too frequently, however, a first complaint contact goes nowhere. That's when to escalate. Calling may work but you'll likely deal with a low-level (and low-powered) call center. So writing is better.

No matter how you're communicating — phone, email, instant message, letter, online support chat — keep records of contact names and what's said. These are essential for recapping, summarizing, and (especially) escalating. If it's a large company or you expect to have further contact with them, request a case or "ticket" number for tracing your request.

Use company Web sites, Google, and other online resources to identify and

locate senior executives. Check Web site links such as "About us," "Press room," and "Investor relations." Write to the CEO by name and title, briefly describing, with a tone of regret, what went wrong. You certainly won't hear back in person from Ms/Mr. CEO, but most large companies have an Office of the Chairman with staff to calm down and cheer up unhappy customers. Pursuing matters to the top works. After Starbucks' Web staffers were unresponsive to a complaint, escalating to the chairman resulted in an apology and a \$50 store card.

Remain courteous. Don't rant or threaten and surely don't overuse CAPITAL letters. That makes your message hard to read and look like a crude ransom note. No matter what you're told, emphasize that you're not angry at whoever you're speaking or e-mailing with and that you understand they're probably bound by company policies. Staying calm and cheerful sets you apart from most people and improves the odds of your getting satisfaction.

Be brief but complete. Provide enough history and detail to be clear and compelling but don't ramble or include non-essential details.

Be precise. Quote error messages, identify people involved, list event sequences so you're believable. When I complained that a Web site didn't use encryption for processing credit card information, the owner at first disagreed but when I proved my assertion, he was outraged — at his Webmaster, for botching security. He then asked what I'd intended to purchase and sent it to me free, along with other items.

Include good news. If you're a long-time customer, had a recent pleasant experience with the company, can praise a particular employee, or have ever recommended the company's products or services, say so. If whatever you're griping about was a mixed picture, begin by describing what you liked.

LET COMPANIES TURN PROBLEMS INTO REWARDS

Raise issues when there's time and flexibility to remedy them. For example, when finalizing a stay at Nemaquin, a luxury Pennsylvania resort, I was

unhappy to learn that two signature restaurants would be closed during our planned stay. Instead of suffering in silence or — with difficulty — changing our travel dates, I politely contacted the general manager to suggest that guests be informed of such restrictions when initially making reservations. He agreed, and offered to have his Five-Diamond chef prepare a fantasy meal for us including anything we requested. His only advice was, "Challenge the chef." So we did — and the world-class chef and two assistants spent three hours serving us privately, with Champagne and cocktails, on a day that the restaurant was indeed closed. And — as arranged in advance — one of the most memorable meals of my life cost half the normal price of dining there. So a problem identified early and solved graciously resulted in my being a huge fan of the resort, the general manager, and the chef.

Complaining, even to the top, doesn't always work. I've certainly been ignored — received no response — and received dismissive responses offering neither apology nor any gesture of atonement. When this happens, the final option is going public via Twitter, blogs, etc. Many companies monitor their online reputations and respond to credible complaints with remedies.

But usually, company management values and responds to customer feedback; I've established cordial relationships with executives by identifying areas needing improvement. Writing letters is easy and inexpensive enough — and after sending a few you'll have stock phrases that make it simple — that it's worth doing to remedy all but the smallest problems.

Five minutes and a stamp has been a small price to pay for a \$50 Starbucks card, a unique luxury meal, Web site merchandise, and many hundreds of dollars worth of refunds, merchandise, and services.

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Are You Getting The Real Deal?

Learn How To Protect Yourself When Shopping For Software Online

NAPSA, North American Precis Syndicate (Association)



Cori Hartje

(NAPSA) Every year, millions of consumers unknowingly purchase software from pirates. At a time when shoppers are looking to save money, counterfeiters offer sub-standard products at prices that may be tempting. Counterfeit software can look just like the genuine product, but it can expose unsuspecting victims to spy-ware, malware and viruses and even lead to identity theft.

According to the Business Software Alliance, it is estimated that 41 percent of all software in stalled worldwide in 2008 was pirated.

The value of this unlicensed software has reached \$53 billion annually. "Selling counterfeit software is big business. Although customers might think they are getting a good deal by buying software at a discount, it might be more costly in the long run," said Cori Hartje, senior director, Microsoft Genuine Software Initiative. "It's important that customers know what to look for and how to better protect themselves."

Microsoft recently conducted an online survey that looked at perceptions and attitudes on computer security and counterfeit or nongenuine software. It found that four in 10 respondents say they can't tell the difference between counterfeit and genuine software.

In the United States alone, nearly half (48 percent) of the 308 participants said they were not able to tell the difference between genuine and counterfeit software.

Only 41 percent say they know how to check if a product is pirated or counterfeit. Compare that with 96 percent of respondents who say it's important that their computer is secure from viruses and other security threats.

"This shows there's a major gap that leaves customers easy prey to counterfeiters," Hartje said.

James Edwards, a customer in Florida, recounts his experience as a victim of counterfeiting: "I found out I had a counterfeit copy of Windows when I went through the validation process. The

seller's price was only a bit lower than the market average, so I just thought I was getting a better deal."

Pirates and counterfeiters are becoming increasingly more sophisticated, and their nongenuine software is becoming harder to spot. Eighty-six percent of the Microsoft survey respondents cited quality as the No.1 factor when determining if a product is genuine.

So what should consumers do if they can't touch, feel or get a good look at the products they find online?

"The best way customers can protect themselves is if they buy from someone they know and can speak with directly," Hartje said. "Buying from a computer manufacturer or another reputable reseller is the safest way to buy software online."



Think you can tell the difference? The genuine Microsoft Office version is on the right.

Linda Elmenhorst, a customer in Oklahoma, shared that "After purchasing what I thought was a legitimate package of Microsoft Office software and loading it, I went to a Microsoft Web site to check for updates and other software. It would not validate that it was a genuine product. I needed this software to perform business functions and wanted the updates and downloads."

Microsoft provides free and easy-to-use tools that customers can use to determine if their software is genuine. The How to Tell Web site, http://www.microsoft.com/howto_tell, features pictures of recently seized software and guidance on what consumers should look out for when buying software online.

Questions that consumers should be asking before they purchase software include these:

- Are you buying from a reputable reseller?

- Would you be able to contact the reseller personally if there were issues?
- Have you checked the software manufacturer's Web site for suggested sources for their software?
- Is all the normal documentation that you expect to see provided with the product?

Customers who have been duped into purchasing pirated or counterfeit software should return to the reseller and ask for their money back. They may also want to contact their credit card company to see if there is recourse and report the pirated Microsoft software to piracy@microsoft.com or at www.bsa.org for other products.

Buying software online can be risky, but with tools to help protect themselves, customers can find a great bargain and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of counterfeit.

Treadmill Desk

Look at what someone came up with! this was sent to me as an "interesting item." How would you like to have one?

So, if you want one, I suggest you Google "The Treadmill Desk." I did and the variety of such things (by just as many inventors) was astonishing!

Judi Ball



THE TREADMILL DESK. \$399.95
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(For general information call any Officer or Director listed on Page 2)

Not A Renewal Reminder



Multi-Media

SIG

Includes Digital Cameras, Burning Music CDs, and DVD Movie Making

Weekly SIG 1 - 3 PM

Thursdays

Anderson Sr Center

(Only members will be able to use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movies.)

Saturday — 10 AM, Sept 25

At Jane Quinn's Home, contact following for information:

Jane Quinn, 365-0825

qjquinn7427@gmail.com



DTP and Graphics Art SIG

Do you have an interest in creating DeskTop Publishing projects, such as flyers, business cards, logos, newsletters, etc., or art and photo editing and manipulation? We have an informal forum, so bring a question, problem, project and we'll all work together to solve it.

Basic Windows knowledge of copy and paste is a must.

Wednesday — 2:10 PM - 4 PM

Please see below for info

See map below for meeting place.

Judi Ball 275-4632

jebed@charter.net



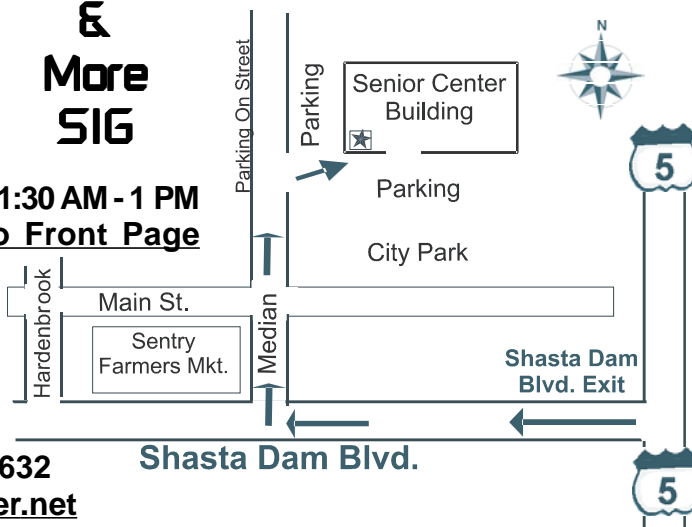
Windows & More SIG

Wednesday — 11:30 AM - 1 PM

Please refer to Front Page and Page 5,

Editor's

Corner



Bill Ball 275-4632

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Redding, CA
96049-4778



4th Tuesday Monthly Meetings Are At The Redding Library



1100 Parkview Ave.,

off Cypress and to the right of City Hall.

We will be in the Community Room, which is to the left of the main library door.

Why Join A Computer Group?

1. Benefit from a common interest in a personal (and costly) investment: Your business or personal computer.
2. Enjoy more of that investment by learning more about it.
3. Share tips and tricks, as well as new and old ideas.
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5. Receive an informative monthly newsletter.
6. Have access to various club functions and all Special Interest Groups (SIGs).
7. Find out that no one needs to be alone and helpless with today's computer technology.