

# MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

Volume 2010, Number 11

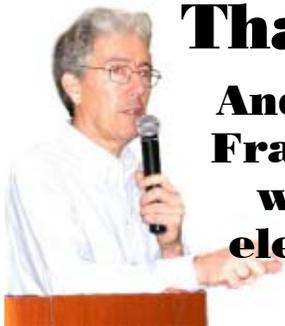
<http://cugr.apcug.org/>

November 2010

## YOUR C.U.G.R. PRESENTS

4th Tuesday, November 23, 2010

### That's right! It's Frank Tona Time!



And because he's in the know via Crown Camera, Frank will talk about all the new digital cameras, web cams and anything else we're thinking of electronically for gifts at Christmas. And for the kids over 40 in the audience, he has candy!

#### Door Prizes

1. Snazzy Illuminated Optical Mouse
2. 5-in-1 LCD Clock
3. Canon Photo Paper

~ Plus ~

#### Frank Tona Will Have Fun Prizes

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.

Christmas Party Dec. 21



#### CUGR Calendar

CUGR Board Meeting  
3:15 PM Monday, Nov 29  
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

**MULTI-MEDIA**  
10 AM, Saturday,  
Dec is to be announced

**WINDOWS & MORE**  
DEC 1ST & 2ND WED, 11:30 PM  
Dependent on Interest  
Please Call

**DTP SIG**  
DEC 1ST & 2ND WED, 2:10 PM  
Dependent on Interest  
Please Call

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!

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**MS Word, PowerPoint,  
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**Digital Image Pro** qjquinn@charter.net

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(no microwaves or large appliances)

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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.

## Bits And Pieces

by Rush Blodget; IMB/PCUG of  
Redding, [rmaxtwo@charter.net](mailto:rmaxtwo@charter.net)

Folks,

Rush is doing very well after his illness in October, and is out and about town again. However, he is going to take a well-earned vacation from his article this month. As usual, though, we can look forward to more informative articles in the future.

Very glad you are doing so well, Rush.



## Editor's Corner

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

### FROM THE BOARD

The board thought it might be a fun incentive for members to enjoy a gift for bringing in new members, so we are offering half off your membership for each new membership you can bring to the club (1 membership covers a family).

This will begin in January. So if you have a person or family on your mind and think they would be benefitted by joining our club, tell him, her, or them about us and how we'd love to see them at January's meeting when we will be sharing all of our new fandangled electronic gifts with one another.

And in the meantime, if you bring someone to our meeting in November and they join, your 2011 yearly membership will be half of the usual \$25. (December's Christmas party is closed to all but members and their families)

By the way, if you do have folks in mind, pick up an extra newsletter at the next meeting for them and don't forget to tell them that every membership receives a Motherboard monthly, except in August. And don't forget to tell about the presentations and door prizes we provide to members, besides giving computer help when we can to one another.

See you at the November meeting with Frank Tona.

Judi Ball

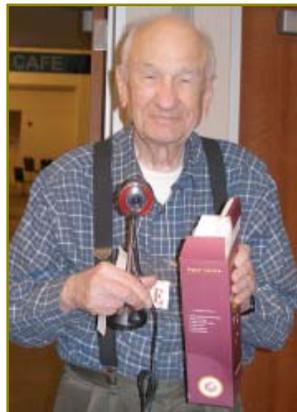
# October Meeting



## Congratulations To Our Winners!



~~~~~  
Bernice Bennett  
won the  
Digital Tri-pod!



Dave Cox  
won the  
goose-neck  
adjustable  
Web Cam!



~~~~~  
Larry Owens  
won the  
4-way USB  
Lady Bug Hub!



## Welcome Renewals

*Jeanie Richardson*

*John & Debby*

*Hamman*

*Marlene Robinson*

*Colly & Sharon*

*Lord*

### 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.

Don't be shy about presenting our non-profit organization to a local business. You would be surprised at how they usually like to be involved with a local, community club like ours. Take a newsletter with you so they can see what it is all about.

So, if you have (or know of) a local business that might 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  
jebed@charter.net

### CUGR MEMBER WEBSITES

**MEXICAN-TOURS**  
[www.mexican-tours.com](http://www.mexican-tours.com)  
Lyle VanNorman  
[bbcreelmx@yahoo.com](mailto:bbcreelmx@yahoo.com)

**Publicize Your WebSite  
Here for FREE!**  
*(Members Only Please)*

## 2011 Officer Nominations For Nov. Election

Elections take place during the November general meeting and new officers begin their duties in January of 2009.

Nominations so far are:

**President** Mike Doyle **Vice President** Richard Marx

**Treasurer** Mario Quinn **Secretary** Margaret Martinovich

These folks, along with all board members, have been in board positions for many years now and care enough to continue to give their time for the sake of the continuance of the club. Please consider taking a position with the board as director, officer, or helping with any of the club jobs.

If you would like to help, please contact any board member on Page 2. We do **need your help**. And this truly is *your* club.

## How To Make Your Website's Design Shine

NewsUSA



Whether you're preparing for your wedding, chronicling your travels or running a small business, a website or blog is the easiest way to share information with family, friends, professional contacts or customers. With advances in technology making it easier to build websites, millions of Americans are figuring out the basics of web design. Others are turning to professional designers for help.

What makes a website's design successful? According to design experts, there are five keys to effective website design. These tips will help ensure that your website attracts visitors, encourages them to browse and — if you're selling — entices customers to buy.

1. Minimalist design. Your website should look clean and uncluttered. Minimalist design makes it easy for visitors to concentrate on the content. If a page has too many elements, visitors may become confused. This doesn't mean the design has to be boring — a simple approach, focusing on a few key details, will make it look modern and stylish.
2. Fabulous photos. Avoid unprofessional or cliché photography and find images that say something genuine about you or your product. For affordable, reliable photography that makes it easier to be creative, try stock photography websites like Veer ([www.veer.com](http://www.veer.com)), which has images for as little as \$1, or for exceptional images, try Corbis Images ([www.corbisimages.com](http://www.corbisimages.com)), which has web-resolution images starting at \$5.

3. Encourage action. Whether you want people to note your wedding details, view your travel photos or make a purchase, make sure that your "call to action" is clear and concise. Use short and snappy language, and large, boldly colored, clickable buttons that are in the top or middle of the page.

4. Focus on fonts. Bold fonts help visitors recognize the important messages and call-to-action on a page, while more common fonts are perfect for explaining the details. Veer.com has thousands of unique fonts for just a few dollars.
5. Color counts. Color conveys meaning and encourages different reactions by visitors.

Don't forget to make good use of white space — the space between different elements of a design. Used well, it allows for easier scanning of your site.

Design resources like Smashing magazine ([www.smashingmagazine.com](http://www.smashingmagazine.com)) or Daily Blog Tips ([www.dailyblogtips.com](http://www.dailyblogtips.com)) provide more in-depth information to help solve specific challenges.

# Googlepedia

A review by George Harding, President, Tucson Computer Society, AZ,

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

This book is the greatest! If you are interested in anything Google, this is the place to go to find out about it.

This is a Que book, the 3rd edition, by Michael Miller, who is a prolific author for Que. He's written some 80 non-fiction how-to books, mostly about computer-related subjects.

The book has over 700 pages, including a comprehensive index, a very complete Table of Contents, 46 chapters and 3 appendices.

I suspect that a 4<sup>th</sup> edition is not far off, because Google is constantly developing new tools that you will want to know about.

The best known Google tool is the Web Search engine. In the olden days, say five years ago, there were several search engines, all of which produced a list of results that contained many duplicates and may not even have produced something useful to you.

Google took a new approach to produce search results that do not have duplicates, are up-to-date and are sequenced by probable usefulness to you. They do this by the following process:

Periodically, usually every few weeks, their GoogleBot crawler searches the web for each page, tracks every link in the page and saves a copy of each page it encounters on its servers.

Google creates an index to each of the saved pages, storing every important word on each page.

Once a search of the pages is complete, the results are ranked by methods known only by Google.

The rankings are displayed on the search results page in order by what is likely to be the most important to you, to the least likely. There are many techniques to making a successful search, and these are described fully in the book. Using quotes or operators can significantly improve the accuracy of your search.

What's most interesting, though, is all the other services provided by Google. I suspect you, like me, are not aware of many of these:

GOOG-411. Search for businesses by voice from your cell phone. Dial 1-800-GOOG-411 to try it out.

Google Desktop. Create a home page environment that has just what you want on it.

Google Docs. Word processing, spreadsheet and presentation documents on the web, sharable with others.

Google Earth, Sky and Mars. Tools to explore these areas.

Google Gmail. An email portal.

Google Groups. Create and join specific discussion groups.

Google Maps. View maps and driving directions.

Google Notebook. Store web information you come across.

Google Reader. Display articles and headlines from blogs and RSS feeds.

Google Scholar. Read and search scholarly journals and articles.

Google Transit. Plan your trip using public transportation.

Google News and Web Alerts. Be advised of new material that meets your criteria.

And more...

Each chapter tells you about a Google service and how to use it. Each description is described simply to begin with, but continues with more details about how to make use of special features. You can easily be an expert user of any of their tools through this book.

All of these services came out of the Google Labs, which is essentially an R & D facility. It is constantly on the search for new, useful tools for users. One recently announced service is Google Voice that gives you free phone calls within the US, but also forwards calls to your cell phone and land line and transcribes voice messages into e-mail.

I found this book fascinating, because it opened my eyes to all the things that are available from Google. It will take me some time to learn about the ones in which I'm interested.

Googlepedia:

Author: Michael Miller

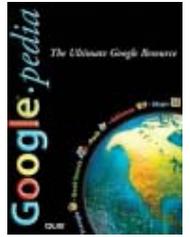
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Price: \$30, \$24 with free membership



## QR Codes: What Are Those QR Codes Of Which You Speak?

by Corinne Goeke, Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ, Oct. 2010 issue, Green Bytes, <http://gvcc.apcug.org/>, [cmgoeke@yahoo.com](mailto:cmgoeke@yahoo.com)

Have you been watching television lately (specifically Fox) and seen a funny black and white pixelated box show up during an ad for a new television show? Or perhaps you have been leafing through the Best Buy ad in the Sunday newspaper and you notice a similar funny picture. Or look here! There is one of these funny images in this article to the left.

These images are called QR Codes. "QR" stands for "Quick Response." To quote Wikipedia: "A QR Code is a

matrix barcode (or two-dimensional code), readable by QR scanners, mobile phones with a camera, and smart-phones. The code consists of black modules arranged in a square pattern on white background. The information encoded can be text, URL or other data."

If you have a Smartphone, find the barcode application on it or download one (there are lots of free ones in the various app stores). Start the app, point your phone's camera at the barcode and let the fun begin. Your Smartphone will read

the barcode, decipher it, and show you what it is.

In this case, the barcode is the URL for the Green Valley Computer Club! Your barcode scanner app should have taken you immediately to the computer club webpage.

Popular for a while in Japan, these barcodes are now showing up in the US and have marketing-types drooling. For example:

*Continued on Page 6*

# Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by SIG Leader Jane Quinn, [gjquinn7427@gmail.com](mailto:gjquinn7427@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 is normally (unless otherwise notified) on the Saturday before our club's general meeting, at my home from 10 am to noon. For directions contact me at [gjquinn7427@gmail.com](mailto:gjquinn7427@gmail.com) or phone 365-0825.

This month our Saturday SIG Nov 13 was a travel movie hour. I was inspired by a program hosted by Crown Camera recently that highlighted travels by a professional photographer. My movies are a blend of photos and movie clips with background music on France, Spain and Portugal. I'm not a professional anything, but certain the palaces, castles, and monuments are fun to see. It was a celebration of the holidays soon to come.

Also, we are enjoying Free Programs that help us stay connected and they are;

Skype 5.0 newest version for Group conferencing. It is possible to have as many as 5 users connect using this web-cam software. It's a great tool for family holiday get-togethers.

TeamViewer — this remote access software is pretty easy to use. Both users download the program and launch

it. The user wishing to be connected for assistance shares his user ID and Pin which is good for a single connection. The person providing support, such as myself, can control the other user's PC in full screen mode. You can find details about the software at their site [www.teamviewer.com](http://www.teamviewer.com). You can also find a video on utube about this product

DropBox - is like a virtual hard drive that you can store and share files on. It's a fairly straight forward way to sync your files with the added benefit of being able to access them with any computer with Internet access. Simply drop your files into one of DropBox's folders and you're done.

A huge thank you to Bernice Bennett, Anna Horton, Dick Marx, and Colly Lord for their assistance in the October presentation I gave at October's General Meeting.

potential. "Parents need to be aware of the potential dangers and create guidelines to help kids avoid them."

CA Technologies, which serves as the BGCA's national information technology security partner through its global philanthropy program, CA Together IT, helps keep 56,000 BGCA computers secure. It starts off with security software, including anti-virus, anti-spam and anti-spyware technology, and prevention measures that restrict unauthorized use.

"Software can help prevent viruses, spyware and inappropriate spam messages, and allow parents to monitor and help protect their children online," says George Kafkarkou, general manager of CA Technologies. "But parental supervision is the best security measure available to kids."

Parents should know where their children go online and with whom they communicate.

Placing computers in a family room can help you keep an eye on their activities. Parents should instruct children not to give out personal information online, even on sites like Facebook, and ask children to come to them if they encounter anything that makes them nervous or uncomfortable.

For more information, visit:

[www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org).

## QR CODES

From Page 5

In the Best Buy ad, each page has a QR Code. On the page for HD TVs, the QR Code will take you to a website on how to hook up an HD TV.

The barcodes on Fox TV take you to a website for the new television program they were promoting.

A recent snail-mail (meaning mail received via the US. Postal Service) I received from a charitable organization had a QR Code on the back of the envelope. The QR code took you to a video demonstrating the good their organization does.

I work for a business that sells products online. At an upcoming trade show, we plan on having QR Codes displayed in our booth so buyers can

## Are Your Kids And Grandkids Savvy About Internet Safety?



### Parents should know where their children go when they're online.

NewsUSA— The Internet is an important educational tool.

With a click of a mouse, kids can find information on just about anything. Unfortunately, children who don't practice basic Internet safety may expose themselves and their parents to certain risks.

Children can easily stumble upon inappropriate content. Chat rooms have a reputation for encouraging Internet

predation, but pedophiles can stalk victims from Web sites like Facebook as well. Many kids don't realize that anyone can read what they write on the Internet, so they post home phone numbers, addresses, their full names or the names of their schools.

Social networking sites may also expose children to bullying, as peers can send demeaning e-mails, instant messaging and text messages without attracting attention from parents or teachers. Finally, children may download pirated music or movies, or even computer viruses or spyware.

"The Internet is an important resource for kids, if they know how to use it," says John Goslin, chief technology officer of Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA), a non-profit organization that strives to help young people realize their

*Continued to top of next Column*

*Continued on Page 7*

# The Internet, Part 1: Problems With EMail Attachments

by Ian Gemmell, Webmaster, Computer Pals for Seniors - Epping Inc., Australia, July 2010 Newsletter,  
[www.cpepping.net.au](http://www.cpepping.net.au), [OpenWindows@Epping](mailto:OpenWindows@Epping)

E-mail attachments are a very useful way of sending any information already in your computer including Word document files and information that you have located on a website. They are also a simple way of transmitting any documents or images not already on your computer which you can scan directly onto an e-mail using a scanner.

Because of the increasing use of attachments and an increasing number of transmission problems this article sets out to help you deal with them. These problems occur over the whole range of service providers including Outlook, Outlook Express, and more particularly Hotmail and Yahoo.

## SECURITY

Because e-mail attachments are the principal source of computer viruses, the best guideline is not to open them unless

you are expecting them, or are completely satisfied that they come from a reliable source. At the same time, it is imperative that you have a comprehensive and up-to-date anti-virus software program installed.

## TROUBLE SHOOTING PROBLEMS

The first thing to consider is whether you can copy and paste the relevant information directly onto the body of the e-mail and so avoid attachments altogether. Problems with attachments include viewing, opening, sending and receiving e-mails. It is impossible to deal with all of these in this article and in order to assist you in finding solutions we suggest that you go to the following website: <http://help.expedient.com/mailnews/attachments.shtml>

The following topics are dealt with in detail: Problems with the e-mail size.

- Unable to receive/send an attachment.
- File format issues. These cover a wide range.
- Determining what program is associated with the file type.
- Compressed files.
- Common image file types and programs such as JPG.
- E-mail encoding properties.

An important tip is that if you find an attachment has been blocked, forward it to your own up-to-date program such as Gmail and see if it will open. Sometimes, also, you may have trouble with multiple emails because of an older e-mail program. You may have to request the sender to send them separately.

Finally, when you have a problem, use your email provider's Help facility. Also, you can ask for a solution to a specific problem directly in Google.

# The Internet, Part 2: Facebook, Twitter & YouTube

As seniors, we have to accept that these three websites have progressed to the stage where they are much more significant than an interaction site for our grandchildren. Whilst our first interest is mainly to assist the younger generations to appreciate the dangers associated with these sites, they have now taken on a much wider role because of the magnitude of their usage, and the fact that they have extended into much wider areas of influence.

## FACEBOOK

Some current statistics are:

- It has more than 500 million active users.
- There are over 900 million objects that people interact with.
- More than 70 translations are available.

Facebook has extended into a section called Facebook Events. It discusses issues such as the difference between Google Chrome and Internet Explorer. It is planning sections such as Questions and Answers and Medical Technology. It has launched a website called [www.docs.com](http://www.docs.com) which is a Microsoft/Facebook joint venture.

There is a real indication that Facebook is developing the power to help you with everything you might need to know.

## TWITTER

Twitter is a social networking service

that enables its users to send and read other users' messages called "tweets" of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's page. Tweets are publicly visible by default but can be restricted to their friends. Launched in 2006, the site now has 190 million users monthly. One of the largest users is Barack Obama who has 4.7 million friends. Another major user is Google News and Updates. Top topics now include Entrepreneur, News and Technical. Twitter is the major driver of Mobile Net Use.

## YOUTUBE

Youtube started very humbly as a site used mainly by the younger generations to post their own 10 second video clips. It has now developed into a very comprehensive website universally available for all comers to post video contributions which have now become very extensive. Many are high quality informative videos. Youtube has been purchased by Google. Interesting Statistics:

- Exceeds 2 billion views a day.
- There are over seven thousand hours of full length movies.

It will be obvious to all that Youtube is a trap for the unwary as it is a very high user of your download quota.

## QR CODES

From Page 6



easily get to our website on their smartphones.

The possibilities for these QR Codes are endless!

If you feel the need to generate your own QR Codes, there are multiple websites out there that will do it for you. A quick and easy one is Kaywa QR-Code, <http://qrcode.kaywa.com>. Try generating a code for one of your favorite websites or YouTube videos and mail the resulting image to a friend with a smartphone. You'll blow their socks off.

Keep your eyes open, and you'll start to see these QR Codes all over the place. Yes, we have found yet another reason to justify the purchase of a smartphone!

# What Is This Thing Called MP3?

by Mike Morris, Editor/President, Front Range PC Users Group (FRPCUG), CO, <http://www.frpcug.org>, [twriterext@gmail.com](mailto:twriterext@gmail.com)



Over the past few years, I have received numerous questions about the meaning of various terms, such as MP3, BlackBerry, etc. These questions have come from FRPCUG members, participants in the computer classes taught by FRPCUG and offered through the Fort Collins, CO Senior Center, and many others.

Those questions led to a Digital Gadgets presentation at a FRPCUG meeting with the presentation material posted on the FRPCUG web site, and to this article. Actually, to a series of articles, because it is not possible to include sufficient information in just one article.

In this article I examine one piece of computer jargon: MP3. I expect that almost everyone that has any interest in music knows that the term MP3 is closely related to music. The interesting fact about those three characters is that they are used to describe both hardware and software.

The software description applies to: “. . . a patented digital audio encoding format . . . It is a common audio format for consumer audio storage, as well as a de facto standard of digital audio compression for the transfer and playback of music on digital audio players.” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MP3>).

The primary advantage of the MP3 format (from the same Wikipedia article) is that it: “. . . greatly reduce(s) the amount of data required to represent the audio recording and still sound like a faithful reproduction of the original uncompressed audio for most listeners. An MP3 file that is created using the setting of 128 kbits/s will result in a file that is about 11 times smaller than the CD file created from the original audio source.”

That data reduction is called “lossy compression,” which means exactly what it says. Using the MP3 format means that some audio information is lost when the music is encoded. And therein lays the primary disadvantage of the MP3 format — for some. A number of tests have been performed



on MP3 music files, and that lost information is not discernable by a large majority of listeners. There are those, however, who claim that they can tell the difference between an MP3 music file and, for example, the same music on a CD (which is not compressed).

There is your trade-off:

- With MP3 you have smaller files, which give you the ability to store many more songs on your computer or other storage device. The price you pay is reduced audio quality (which you may not be able to hear).
- With uncompressed audio files, you get better sound quality, but files sizes are large.

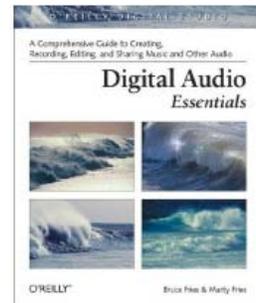
Depending on several factors, a one minute clip can take over 10 MB. That's right; 10 MB for each minute of music (see reference at the end of this article).

There are other digital audio encoding formats available today, including several that are open source. In fact, if you connect to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_audio\\_codecs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_audio_codecs), you will find a comparison of 35 audio formats (including MP3). Some provide lossy compression, others encode music without compression. You may have heard of a few of them:

- AAC (used with Apple's iTunes)
- Ogg Vorbis
- Windows Media Audio

There are “better” formats available than MP3. “Better” in the sense that audio output quality is better even though the format uses compression. So why is MP3 the “de facto standard”? I don't have a good answer for that question. Perhaps it was a question of availability. For an overview of digital audio players (including a variety of devices), connect to: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital\\_audio\\_player](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_audio_player).

Whatever the reason, the MP3 format is the industry standard—at least for portable media players. Because the MP3 format is so widely used, the hardware (actually hardware and software) used to play MP3 formatted music is



also identified as MP3—or perhaps as an MP3 device.

Therefore, when you say “MP3,” you are actually talking about a software program located on a hardware storage device of some sort that takes a digital file of music and converts it to something a human can understand (unless, of course, you are involved directly with the MP3 encoder).

There are probably hundreds of variations of portable media player devices available today. Virtually all of them will play the MP3 format. Many newer products will play several formats. Connect to ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_portable\\_media\\_players](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_portable_media_players)) for a comparison of 34 media players (as of mid 2010). There are products available with a very wide range of features and in many different price ranges.

With all those choices, don't try to buy something before you do your homework. One web site that can help you sort through the choices is the CNET MP3 Player Finder at [http://reviews.cnet.com/4247-6490\\_7-10.html](http://reviews.cnet.com/4247-6490_7-10.html). You can search by price range, or by manufacturer, or among other options, by audio format.

An excellent reference that will help you understand digital audio is:

Digital Audio Essentials  
Bruce Fries and Marty Fries  
O'Reilly Media, Inc, 2005  
ISBN 0-596-00856-2

Not only will this book help you understand digital audio and digital audio formats, but there is whole chapter that talks about recording music on CDs.

Spend a few minutes browsing through the web sites in this article. Find a copy of the Digital Audio book and browse through that. That will be time well spent because then you will be an informed consumer.

# What Kind Of PC Do I Want?

by Randy N. Ridge, a member of the Cajun Clickers Computer Club, Louisiana, and active Tech Team member, Oct. 2010 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News, [www.cccc.org](http://www.cccc.org), [ccnewsletter@cox.net](mailto:ccnewsletter@cox.net)

What you want your PC to do will dictate what kind of PC you buy or build.



Building a PC has not changed much over the last 15 years; what has changed is the increased power of the components and just exactly which component you need to perform what function. I lump PC's in the following categories:

1. Internet and Email PC
2. Business PC
3. Media PC
4. Gaming PC

Let's take these one at a time:

## INTERNET AND E-MAIL PC

These PCs require the fewest resources. Usually, you can use a system that has a built in video card and minimal RAM — 512 megabyte of Ram for XP users and 2 gigabytes for Vista and Windows 7 users. Minimum Hard Drive for an old system would probably be 80-120 gigabytes. For a new system a 1-terabyte drive is the most cost effective. The CPU speed should run anywhere from 1.7 gigahertz to 2.4 gigahertz single core system for an older XP machine to a 2.0+ dual core for a Windows Vista or Windows 7 machine. The operating system should be the Home or Home Premium version of the software. The price range should run from \$125-\$650 depending upon whether you buy new or used.

## BUSINESS PC

A business PC doesn't have to be overly powerful; but it will need to run Microsoft Office and preferably multiple applications simultaneously. This will mean a minimum of 1 gigabyte RAM

on an XP Machine, and a 2.4+ single core processor with no special graphics adapter. On a Vista or Windows 7 machine, I would go with a 2.4+ dual core system with 3 Gigabytes of RAM. You could get by with onboard graphics; but if you need to drive large or multiple monitors you may want to consider a high-end Graphics card. The hard drives would start at 250 gigabytes and up. You typically would use the Pro versions of the operating systems in order to log into a server-based network. Price range is \$500-\$1200.

## MEDIA/GAMING PC

I will cover the last two together since they are similar in some ways. I start out with a minimum 4+ gigabytes of RAM, 3.0+-gigahertz dual core processor, video graphics card and sound card. With the Media machine I would add a Blu-Ray player/DVD writer for watching Blu-Ray discs. Where the Gaming PC differs is pushing the power. A dual core processor will work but quad core is better. The more video card you can buy the better for games. The media PC needs an HMDI output on the video to connect directly to your TV. You can also buy a TV card that connects directly to the cable. A TV card for around \$400.00 is available which will take a card from your cable company that will function as a DVR. I checked with Eatel, and you can get the add-in card from them which will record up to 4 channels at a time including HD content for \$3.50 per month. A premium sound card is



needed for both systems with surround sound. The hard drive would be minimum 1-terabyte but I would consider multiple drives for media files and setup a RAID system. I prefer the Ultimate versions of the operating systems for these machines. The price range \$1200-\$2500.

This is just a general outline. For some hardcore research, search YouTube, or check out these Websites:

[www.tomshardware.com](http://www.tomshardware.com)  
[www.anandtech.com](http://www.anandtech.com)  
[www.maximumpc.com](http://www.maximumpc.com)  
[www.pcworld.com](http://www.pcworld.com)



# Unwanted Formatting And How To Get Rid Of It

by Judi Ball, Motherboard Newsletter Editor, Computer Users' Group Of Redding, CA

During my DTP & Graphics class this month, the need to strip unwanted formatting in an article came up. The student had received an article via e-mail that she copied and pasted into the MS Publisher newsletter she sends across the nation. But no matter what she did to reformat this article, it would not be accepted, nor would it release any previous *codes* that were behind the preset formatting problems. Such as, it would not even accept the simple change of font and font size she wanted to use. And to make things worse, it *changed all the formatting* on the whole page of other articles!

So here is why and how to overcome such a problem, whether you are only copying a recipe from the net, or a little text from your e-mail, or a huge article from a website. This should work. Also I will explain how to keep a graphic that might be shown, say, with the recipe and you would like to have it also.

There are three most common file formats to understand and then you need to know just what the "codes" and "stripping the codes" mean. Don't panic, it's not all that horrendous to get a glimpse of!

First we'll look at the format of a word (.doc) or publisher document (.pub), such as MS Word.doc or Word Perfect.wpd, or MS Publisher.pub, or Adobe PageMaker.pmd. (By the way, the *d* in .wpd and .pmd stands for "document!" So we are talking about the same thing. Don't let manufacturers confuse you with their variety of title terms.)

In order for all the punctuations, (paragraph returns, bold, tabs, indents, etc.) and other formatting, to be understood by the computer's brain, these features are each recognized by the computer in a *code*. The following in parentheses is such a code: (Content-Type: multipart/mixed; boundary="0-793157050-1271125340=:11677" x-aol-global-disposition: G), which doesn't mean much to us. Besides, in a huge document these strings of commands can be horrendous. However, normally we don't even see it, except for when a piece of text will simply not format according to *our* specifications when poured into a word processor or publisher document. These are preset codes by the *original writer*. And, by the way, the original writer usually does not even know that these codes are in their prized works. The *writing program* is doing it.

Now about the .RTF format. This stands for Rich Text Format, which means it will keep a writer's formatting, but still clean up a lot of unnecessary formatting we don't usually know about and will not miss. And that means that its file size can be a lot less than a .doc's file size. So, less storage space needed can mean .rtf is great as a replacement for a word document in your stored area, although, not so great for a publishing document, as these are much more involved with many features and will not convert to a Rich Text Format.

And now, finally, there is the simple .txt format. Meaning text. This one has very little formatting to it. There will be paragraph returns, capitals, most punctuations, but that's about it. It is sort of a very clean, non-expressive piece of reading. And so all other formatting will be eliminated when the file is saved as a .txt. And as an added bonus to .txt files: if formatting is not important to a piece of writing you are saving, the .txt will actually save more storage space. But be aware that there will be no formatting left whatsoever.

Now back to "stripping" heavily formatted text, such as something you came across over the net that some of it might be in a box, separated from other parts of the article; or some words in color, or paragraphs are separated by an unseen code that just will not go away, no matter how you try to reformat it.

So, because the simple .txt format has little codes involved, it is the perfect way to "strip" those unwanted codes! How? Easy, just *copy* the fancy, overly formatted article with all the unwanted pictures, graphics, and anything else the writer had thrown in, then *paste* it into a new .txt document and save it. At this point, the save feature will pop up with this dialog box: "You are about to save the document in a Text-Only format, which removes all formatting. Are you sure you want to do this?"

If you click No, in the "Save as type:" you will have the choice of "Rich Text Format," "Text Document," "Text Document - MS Dos Format," and "Unicode Text Document." If you want to save the format, click on No and select Rich Text Format.

But to strip the formatting, you are going to click on Yes, and it will be instantly saved, although it will look the same, until you close it and open it again. Now you will see all the formatting, boxes, pictures,

etc., except the simplest of formatting, is *gone*. Halleluiah!

Now copy the content, or insert the .txt file, into your Word or Publishing document and reformat the article to suit your own needs. This is what I must do to work with all the articles I place in our Motherboard, because the cumbersome follow-along formatting and the wide variety of formatting from the different writers do not comply with the consistent formatting that our newsletter is set up for in Adobe PageMaker. And by the way, this would be the same for almost any pre-set publication situation. Look at any novel or newspaper/magazine on the stands, you will notice that they each have a format which is consistent throughout their publication for a smooth polished look that makes it an easy read. Each page begins and ends at the same place, titles are usually the same font throughout, etc.. Otherwise it will look messy, unfinished, and even unreadable. So consistency is important for the reader in any written situation.

So, now give it a try and see how easy all of this is. And if you need to see it work, and would like to learn more tips about re-formatting previous code problems, join us in Shasta Lake at my DTP Class (see page 1 and 12 for class meeting dates). We are informal and all are welcome. Phone is 275-4632. E-mail is [jebed@charter.net](mailto:jebed@charter.net).

## Writing Tip

This is for *anyone* writing *anything*. In today's world of e-mail shortcuts, texting, and even published text, the casual attitude toward words, grammar, and punctuation has become more and more noticeable. And it is like an epidemic among most people. Simple punctuations from grade school are constantly being placed with a space between the end of a sentence and its ending symbol, such as the *period*. Spaces are being placed before commas, and other character symbols too. We were taught better, what has happened to simple writing habits in the modern world?

Spelling is another abused habit, even though we have our PC spell and grammar checkers to do the work for us.

It is truly amazing how well educated and worth the read an author will appear to a reader when they take time to express themselves with just a little care.

Judi Ball



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

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## 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, Dec

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

Jane Quinn, 365-0825

[qjquinn7427@gmail.com](mailto: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

Dec 1st & 2nd Weds

If interested, please call

See map below for meeting  
place.

Judi Ball 275-4632

[jebed@charter.net](mailto:jebed@charter.net)



## Windows & More SIG

Wednesday — 11:30 AM - 1PM

Dec 1st & 2nd Weds

If interested, please call

Bill Ball 275-4632

[bcard9@charter.net](mailto:bcard9@charter.net)



IBM/PC Users Group  
of Redding  
P.O. Box 494778  
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.*

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7. Find out that no one needs to be alone and helpless with today's computer technology.