

We hope you haven't forgotten about us since the last issue of The WindowWalk Times! We took a nice long summer break but we're back now and raring to go. Check out what we've found for you - online and in our backyard.

**Season's Greetings and
Best Wishes for the New Year!**

Seniors Social: You are invited to the 2nd annual Serving Seniors Social Presented by Tim Horton's in Celebration of Democracy 250 on November 15, 2008 at the Holiday Inn, Dartmouth from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. This is a free social event involving several entertainment and information segments aimed at the interests and needs of seniors. Serving Seniors is a resource for seniors and their families seeking dedicated professionals to meet their needs. Click here for more information about the event. FREE tickets (value \$5.00) are available by calling Grey Power at 425-1515 or contacting a Serving Seniors member.

Stay green and save money by re-filling the ink cartridges in your inkjet/photo printers. Island Inkjet has moved to Dartmouth Superstore Mall on Portland St. (463-7715) from MicMac Mall. You can also drop-off your cartridges at the following locations: Burnside Pharmasave, Waverley Road Pharmacy, Pharmasave Hammonds Plains, Econo Color Scotia Square, Campus Copy Dalhousie, SMUSA Info Desk.

New MBA Website: If you own or manage a business in the Metro area, be sure to check out the Metro Business Association's new web site: www.metrohalifaxbusiness.ca. See if metro's longest-running networking group is right for your business.

WindowWalk Computer Education offers on-site courses and hourly training ranging from the basics to advanced "power user" features. We pride ourselves in making your computer education a fully personalized, comfortable, and convenient experience.

Visit on the web, send an email , or call 830-9336 to learn more about our effective software training or to give us your comments and suggestions.

Small Business Owners: WindowWalk Computer Education specializes in QuickBooks and Simply Accounting training to help make your and your tax preparer's task easier. Take advantage of our QuickBooks ProAdvisor's 20+ years of small business accounting experience.

Beginners: Our Windows Foundation course gives you all the basics you need to use your computer. Learn about the internet and email with us and raise your comfort level quickly to get you out exploring cyberspace on your own.

We want everyone to have a more comfortable experience with their computer. Call us today for a free consultation or assessment .

SURFIN' SAFARI

Some useful and interesting web sites.

Stockhouse

www.stockhouse.com

Stockhouse is half social network for investment pros and plain ol' investors, and half information resource, letting users keep a finger on the pulse of the financial world. You can track stock prices, swap trading tips, and even add other users as friends. Just like Wall Street, but without all the golf and cigar smoke!

Totlol

www.totlol.com

YouTube is a phenomenon, but it's not exactly guaranteed to be kid-friendly. Totlol takes care of that. Actual human beings vet videos from all over the Web as suitable for kids age 6 months to 6 years and embed them at this site. I found classics like Kermit singing "It's Not Easy Being Green" on Sesame Street on up to modern VeggieTales and Wiggles and lots of obscure stuff in between. And of course, cute personal videos abound, all kid safe, all in bite-size chunks great for those kid-size (and modern adult) attention spans.

Oddee

www.oddee.com

Oddee collects and archives the weird photos blowing around the Internet, broken down into Digg-friendly and easily digestible lists. Honestly, we have no idea how some of these shots could not be tweaked by a creative photo editor—except, of course, for this list of the "12 Worst Photoshop Mistakes ever."

WHAT DOES IT DO?

RealPlayer 11

One of the dinosaurs of media playback, RealPlayer has been on the scene since 1995. Sometimes it feels like it hasn't been updated since then, no matter what the version number says. Still, RealPlayer 11 introduces a major new function and takes care of some frustrating bugs, making it respectable once again.

RealPlayer 11 gives you the ability to download videos from thousands of Web sites with just one click, and now you can even burn them to CD. Watch them whenever and wherever you want. Download Internet videos with one click, build your own video library and playlists, or burn your favorite videos to CD or DVD with RealPlayer. RealPlayer plays all major audio and video formats.

RealPlayer can play all of the major formats used on the Web, including Real, Windows Media, QuickTime MPEG-4, MP3, as well as the secure versions of these formats used by online music stores. For the first time ever, RealPlayer 10 makes it possible for consumers to use a single media player to play music on their PC purchased from all of the major online music stores.

Learn more and download RealPlayer: <http://www.realplayer.com>

SAY WHAT!?

Sound like a computer wizard.

- iPhone** The iPhone is an internet-connected multimedia smartphone designed and marketed by Apple Inc. with a flush multi-touch screen and a minimal hardware interface. The device lacks a physical keyboard, so a virtual keyboard is rendered on the touch screen. The iPhone's functions include those of a camera phone and portable media player (equivalent to the iPod) in addition to text messaging and visual voicemail. It also offers Internet services including e-mail, web browsing, and local Wi-Fi connectivity.
- Beta** In software development, a beta test is the second phase of software testing in which a sampling of the intended audience tries the product out. Beta testing can be considered "pre-release testing." Beta test versions of software are now distributed to a wide audience on the Web partly to give the program a "real-world" test and partly to provide a preview of the next release.
- Cybercafe** A cybercafe is a cafe, coffee or espresso shop, or similar food and/or beverage-serving place that has a number of personal computers connected to the Internet and available for use by customers. Some cybercafes allow customers to use the computers at no charge; others charge by the hour or fraction of an hour.
-

TECH EXPERT

In-Depth Look at Windows 7

Posted November 6, 2008
by Adrian Kingsley-Hughes

Given that I knew most of you would be virtually blasted out of your chairs by a "shock and awe" of Windows 7 reviews once the news embargo on the OS was lifted (combined with the fact that I only got my hands on a copy of Build 6801 a couple of days later), I decided to take my time to get to know the OS before I shared with you my thoughts and feelings about Microsoft's latest OS.

Installing Windows 7 is quick ... very quick! I managed to get Windows 7 installed and ready to go in under 15 minutes on one system - a time that makes Vista seem like a lumbering dinosaur.

Beyond the speed boost, the setup process for Windows 7 Build 1601 is pretty much the same as for Vista in that you interact with it at the beginning and the end of the process, but for the most part it gets on with the install by itself.

Once I'd recovered from shock of the speed of the install (I'd set aside 45 minutes, and was done in 15!), I was next struck by how fast Windows 7 is. There's none of the sluggishness and lag that I remember with early builds of Vista and XP. Everything is snappy and responsive ... Start Menu, Control Panel applets, applications ... everything. About the only thing I've come across so far that was slow was the Magnifier tool ... this tool about 20 seconds to load. Side by side, Windows 7 is far snappier and more responsive than Windows Vista. That alone is promising for the future.

Also, bootup and shut down times are faster. Basic tests show that bootup is some 10% faster and shut down some 15%. Impressive.

If there's one word to describe the Windows 7 UI (User Interface) it's this - Unfinished! In fact, using Windows 7 puts you in a wierd wonderland of Vista mixed in changes for Windows 7.

That said, there's a lot of new stuff to see - desktop tweaks, taskbar tweaks, Windows Explorer tweaks, Control Panel tweaks. Some long-time Windows applications such as Paint, WordPad and Calculator have received a fresh lick of paint too, although I'm not sure how the Ribbon UI (which debuted in Office 2007) will go down with users who've not seen it before.

It seems that Microsoft has taken on board the constructive criticism it received over User Account Control (UAC) and provided users with setting to make it less annoying. Windows 7 provides four settings, ranging from "Always notify" to "Never notify." The default setting is "Only notify me when programs try to make changes to my computer," which seems to offer a happy middle ground.

OK, enough messing about! Down to the real questions:

* Is Windows 7 better than Vista?

* Is Windows 7 better than XP?

I'm going to go out on a limb and say yes, but with conditions. It's too early to know whether the performance gains will translate into the RTM release, and there's still a lot of work to be done, but the OS that I'm seeing in Build 1601 has potential. It's also without a doubt easier to use (setting up a new theme, configuring a printer or finding out what's wrong with your network is a lot easier and takes fewer steps).

The UI is also cleaner, and little tweaks such as clicking in the bottom right hand corner of the taskbar to get to the desktop makes more sense than having a separate icon and so on. Little things like this make the UI cleaner and ultimately easier to use.

This article was submitted by Andy Butler of Compatible Computer Services; (902) 420-1212. CCS provides sales and service support for PCs and Restaurant & Retail Point of Sales systems and develops client-specific custom-built business software applications.

HARDWARE HELPER

Top 5 Multifunction Printers

Canon Pixma MX7600

CNET Rating: 8.3 Excellent

The Canon Pixma MX7600 multifunction is a huge improvement over the previous model. With additional features such as an autoduplexer, increased faxing options, and an upgraded control cockpit, we have no problem recommending the MX7600.

Price: \$299.85 - \$407.23

HP Officejet Pro L7780

CNET Rating: 8.2 Excellent

With its wealth of office-oriented features, fast prints, and great print quality, the HP Officejet Pro L7680 is a very compelling all-in-one for small businesses or work groups. We wholeheartedly recommend it.

Price: \$198.46 - \$595.00

Canon Pixma MX700

CNET Rating: 8.0 Excellent

The Canon Pixma MX700 is a great choice for small offices with a wide variety of print tasks. This inkjet multifunction beats out the competition with a winning combination of features and performance.

Price: \$99.99 - \$250.00

HP Officejet J6480

CNET Rating: 8.0 Excellent

The HP Officejet J6480 has a lot of built-in features that are rarely found included in a \$200 printer. Shoppers looking for an all-inclusive multifunctional unit will be impressed with the robust hardware and rich print quality.

Price: \$159.38 - \$229.99

Canon Pixma MP520

CNET Rating: 7.5 Very Good

The Canon Pixma MP520 doesn't offer all the bells and whistles found on other budget all-in-ones, but it's a solid device that does the basics right while delivering best-in-class quality.

Price: \$146.55 - \$159.59

To read the full review at CNET, go to:

http://reviews.cnet.com/best-all-in-one-printers/?tag=rb_content;contentNav

SOFTWARE SEARCH

Microsoft Live

Microsoft's suite of online tools is designed to help small businesses build and maintain a Web presence and manage projects, contacts, and tasks.

Contrary to what its name might suggest, Microsoft Office Live is not an online version of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook. Instead, this hosted suite provides businesses with a staff of 10 or fewer with tools to build and host a Web site, manage contacts, and share projects. For free, the Basic service provides a company with a domain name registration, hosting, and e-mail, along with Web design tools and reports on site traffic.

Why give away the store? Microsoft hopes to snag a large share of the market of small businesses still looking to develop a Web presence and manage operations via the Internet. Plus, its logo (linking to Office Live details, of course) will appear on your Web pages. Plans for keyword ads and online shopping are in the works. Google Apps, by comparison, doesn't offer a free Web site parking space, but it does let you brand online services with your own URL. Unlike Google Apps, Microsoft Office Live lacks a Web-based word processor and a spreadsheet application.

The Microsoft Office Live comes in three flavors, starting with the free Basic, which offers site hosting and building, as well as e-mail support. The Essentials and Premium editions each provide a bundle of business apps, including AdManager, as well as mobile support. The \$19.95/month Essentials edition adds more ways to analyze Web site traffic, along with 1GB of storage space, coordination with Outlook e-mail, and 50 e-mail accounts. For \$39.95/month, Premium doubles the storage space.

Beyond handling your Web site, Microsoft Office Live Essentials and Premium attempt to provide a one-stop shop for core business operations. We appreciated the sparse design of the Dashboard screen, which uses a two-pane layout and tabs to present a calendar and drop-down menus for Customers, Projects, Sales, Employees, and Company.

We didn't run into any glitches while testing this service on Windows XP using Internet Explorer. Then again, we weren't able to make full use of the shared tasks in our brief tour. While Office Live was speedy overall, we experienced brief delays after clicking some links, a potential drawback for businesses. The business applications seem most helpful as a shared work space for a small firm with employees in multiple locations.

Read the full review at CNET:

http://reviews.cnet.com/connectivity/microsoft-office-live/4505-8043_7-31734232.html?tag=mncol;lst

WEB WARY

Viruses, Hoaxes and Scams

7 Tips to Help You Reduce or Stop Spam

1. Use a separate email address when you post messages to any public forum, such as newsgroups and mailing lists. Never use your personal email address for this purpose -- or you'll be flooded with spam.
2. Consider acquiring multiple email addresses for different purposes. This helps you to identify different sources and senders, and lets you filter more effectively. For instance, you may have one for personal use only by friends, family or colleagues that is never used to request information or to subscribe to newsletters, discussion lists, etc. Free mail services like Yahoo! Mail and GMail can be used for this purpose.
3. You can subscribe to services online that provide you with disposable addresses that can be deleted if they begin to attract spam messages. For information on what you need to know about disposable addresses, visit: <http://email.about.com/library/weekly/aa072002a.htm>
4. Remove your email address from your website. If you list or link to your email address, you can expect to be spammed. Address-harvesting robots will spider your site and extract them. So remove them wherever possible and use web-based forms instead.
5. NEVER buy anything from a company that spams. Don't visit their sites or ask for more information. If you respond to their spams, you're encouraging them to continue spamming -- they only need a tiny fraction of responses to be profitable. There's another reason not to buy anything from a company that spams: over 95% of spam offers are scams! In fact, not responding to spam is the single most effective way to not get scammed on the Internet.
6. Filter your email. Using filters is key to managing your email effectively. It may take a short time to figure out how to do this, but it's definitely worthwhile.
7. Consider subscribing to a spam prevention service. We're not enthusiastic about these services, but many people find them invaluable. They range from the good to the bad to the downright ugly, and from free to fee-based.

While these 7 tips may not actually stop spam, they will certainly help you drastically reduce the amount of spam you get.

TIZZIE'S TIPS & TRICKS

Create Email Groups in Outlook Express & Outlook

A group is a collection of email addresses that can be used to send an email to the whole group when you add one address in the To: field of an email. It is a very efficient way to communicate to specific groups of people.

Click the Addresses button on the toolbar in **Outlook Express**.

Click the New button on the Address Book toolbar and click New Group.

Give the group a name.

If you have the addresses already in your Contacts: Click the Select Members button and click each address you want to add to the group. Click the Select button after clicking each email address in the Contacts list.

If you don't have the addresses in your Contacts: Type each address in the boxes for Name and Address at the bottom of the New Group box. Click Add after entering each address.

In Outlook:

Click the Contacts button on the bottom left pane.

Click the small arrow next to the New button and click Distribution List.

Give the group a name.

If you have the addresses already in your Contacts: Click the Select Members button and click each address you want to add to the group. Click the Select button after clicking each email address in the Contacts list.

If you don't have the addresses in your Contacts: Type each address in the boxes for Name and Address at the bottom of the New Group box. Click Add after entering each address.

After you have created a group and you want to send an email to all of the people in the group, do this in both Outlook Express and Outlook:

Create a new email message.

Click the To: button (next to where you can type in an email address) to open your Contacts list.

Find and click the new group you created, then click the To: button and click OK.

You could also just type the name of the group in the To: area of the new message window.

Finish and send the email which will go to everyone in the group.