



PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP, INC GAZETTE



August 2017

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August 2017

“JOIN US FOR FUN AND LEARNING AT CROSSVILLE’S COMPUTER CLUB”

Volume 23, Issue 8

This Month’s Meetings

Photo Editing Workshop

Thursday, August 10 at 1:00 P.M.

At FFG Library Bldg.

Plateau Photography Club

Thursday August 17 at 1:00 P.M.

At FFG Library Bldg.,

General Meeting

Monday, August 21 at **6:00 P.M.**

At Christ Lutheran Church FFG

The August Program at FFG Christ Lutheran Church

MS Windows 10: right click menus and shortcuts

This month’s presentation by Carl Nordeen will discuss Windows 10 menus and shortcut keys.

This version has built-in right click menus and shortcut keys, which can give you a multitude of options.

In some cases, you can run a program as an administrator or you can trouble shoot compatibility.

Other options include:

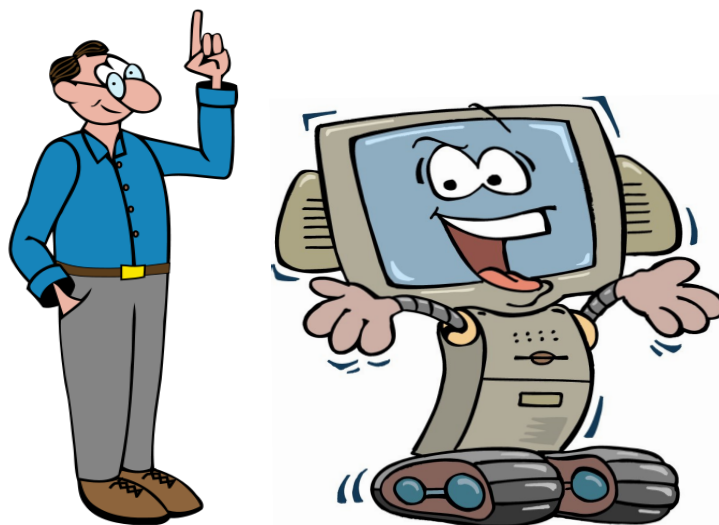
Open file location.

Pin to the start menu.

Rename.

As well as many other options that will be shown.

Using right click menus or shortcut keys gives you more control as opposed to searching the settings menu for options.



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Summer Hours start at **6:00 P.M.** (April through September)
Winter Hours start at **3:00 P.M.** (October through March)

Location: Christ Lutheran Church
481 Snead Drive, Fairfield Glade

Join the Club!

Anyone interested to attend the general meeting or any of the SIG meetings as a guest will be charged \$3.00 per person for any or all meetings in that month. Afterwards, you are encouraged to become a member of the Plateau PC Users Group.

Our Club cannot exist without you, the members.

Membership Dues

Our annual dues are now payable July 1st of each year.

Annual dues are \$24 per single person / \$30 per family starting July 1, 2014, with partial years dues as follows:

Due Date	Jul-Sep 2017 <i>Annual Dues</i>	Oct-Dec 2017	Jan-Mar 2018	Apr-Jun 2018
Single:	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6
Families:	\$30	\$22	\$15	\$7

Student memberships (21 and under) are \$10 annually.

Corporate memberships are \$30 a year for the first two memberships and \$10 a year for each additional membership from the same company.

Contact the PPCUG Treasurer (931) 707-3677

for pro-rated dues of these types of memberships.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DISCLAIMER

All members of the Plateau PC Users Group are willing to help one another in the area of advice and tutorial instruction over the phone. If you should require more involved services or instruction, we have a few members who are very knowledgeable in several areas. As a responsible consumer, it is up to you to discuss, before retaining a member, any and ALL charges for repair services and time consuming tutorial activities.

It is not the desire of this Board of Directors to set fees for individuals for services rendered, nor the responsibility to intervene between members who enter into a contract among themselves.

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All images used in the newsletter, website, blogs, class materials or handouts ("media") are obtained from a "free use" source, preferably images that have been released as "CCO Public Domain".

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Plateau Photography Club Jim Mansfield (931) 484-6920

Photo Editing
Workshop Club Jim Gries FGPhotoworkshop@gmail.com

Up Coming Meeting for September 2017

Note: Summer Hours & Location

The next General Meeting of the
PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP
Will be on September 18 at **6:00 P.M.**
at Christ Lutheran Church
481 Snead Drive FFG
(corner of Snead & Lakeview Drive)

Classes

Please send ideas for new classes to Alan Baker.
(ambaker@citlink.net)

Cool Tips & Sites

OneNote:

The "Secret" Microsoft Office Program

Much of the data you work with each day probably gets stored electronically in some way: you save appointments, meetings, and contacts in Outlook and you likely manage lists and other key data in an Excel worksheet or Word table. How do you handle the stacks of data that doesn't fit into the most popular Microsoft Office programs? What's the best way to handle notes from meetings, brainstorming sessions, classes, project planning, Post-It notes pasted to your monitor, important hand-written text, and "where do I store this?" nuggets. And how can you search this collection of notes and content? Try One-Note.

OneNote is a place to create, gather, store, and search notes. A note can be almost anything you want it to be—a typed line of text, a sketch, an audio or video clip, a picture, a link to a web page or file—you get the idea. Even if you have never heard of OneNote or used it before, it's likely hanging out on your computer just waiting for you to discover this "secret" Microsoft Office tool.

Visit the club website "www.PPCUGinc.com" under "newsletters" and go to the May 2017 addition on page #12 for the article on, Note Keeping Software.

News of the Special Interest Groups

The PPCUG sponsors several Special Interest Groups (SIGs) tailored to meet the varied needs of our many members. Each SIG is a small group whose leader prepares material for presentation and encourages open discussion and questions. We urge you to attend the SIGs and hope you will find one or more of interest to you. Ideas for additional groups are welcome, as are volunteers to form and lead new SIGs.

Plateau Photography Clubs

The Photo Editing Workshop Club is held at 1:00 PM at the Fairfield Glade Library Bldg. on the second Thursday of each month. Members meet to discuss & demonstrate various editing software programs available to enhance their photographs. The SIG leader is Jim Gries. @ FGPhotoworkshop@gmail.com

The Photography Club, a PPCUG SIG, meets the Third Thursday of each month at the Fairfield Glade Library Bldg. at 1:00PM. Topics vary each month but we show and discuss member's photos each month. The SIG leader is Jim Mansfield.

The Photo Club/SIG website

The Photo Club/SIG website is now up. Access to it is through the PPCUG website, using the "Photo Club" navigation link at the top of each PPCUG page. I think that this is a big improvement, and could not have been done without the work of Dallas Richards.

PPCUG Website

Visit our website at www.PPCUGinc.com. The Learning Center class schedule and Gazette are all available on our web site.

Send your comments and suggestions to the Webmaster, Alan Baker
Webmaster@ppcuginc.com (931) 788-2201

PPCUG General Meeting Minutes July 17, 2017

Carl Nordeen welcomed members and guests. Announcing, Acronis True Image 2017, tonight's program via you tube video presentation by Gene Barlow, Users Group Relations.

Gene explained the different types of Backup Systems with their pro and cons.

File Backup: with only data saved; rated poor

Online Backup: using the cloud approach, very slow and could be expensive to rent more storage space from cloud; rated poor

Clone Backup: would need minimum of 3 separate clones for safety rated poor

Acronis True Image Backup: an easy two-step back up and restore approach for both PC and Mac machines; rated excellent

The best way to back up your entire PC is to use an external hard drive, the same size as the hard drive in your computer. Most likely backing up once a week would be okay for home use. Individual files can be backed up as well. Many backups can be stored on one drive.

Should your hard drive crash use the last backup to restore which allows you to restore a few individual files and folders or your entire hard-drive,

Gene has directions step by step on video for the set up and using Acronis True Image Backup.

Gene is not employed by the company but has worked with them for many years; he offers reduced rates to user group members, \$20 instead of \$50. More information can be found on the website at www.ugr7.com.

Carl held Q&A after the video. Some members already use Acronis, which they could offer their experience.

Submitted by:

Cindy West

Secretary



The Personal Computer Golden Age

By Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ

March 2017 issue, BUG Bytes

www.bcug.com

n2nd (at) att.net

Some of us fondly recall the early days of personal computers in the '70s and '80s. We could poke through PC parts in dusty stores, frequently adjacent to ham radio equipment and war surplus electronics, or wait in long lines, in heat or snow depending on the season, for admission to a hall full of vendors whose only addresses were the license plates on their trailers. We would carry our treasures home, install them in our PC, and spend hours getting them to work (or maybe not). We would swap diskette shareware (software that was available for free, but included a request for payment). We had to learn a fair amount just to get our PCs operating, and a good bit more to configure them to work efficiently. There were many computer magazines, and bookstores had shelves full of computer material. However, by today's standards our computers and the applications they ran were limited and crude. The Internet was still in the future, and if we exchanged e-mail it was by using a bulletin board system that we accessed over telephone lines. There were text games, such as Hunt the Wumpus, and those with very crude graphics, such as NetHack. Editors were text only, with few provisions for formatting. Displays were universally cathode ray tubes (even for computers that claimed to be portable) and showed only text. Diskettes provided our only storage.

Today, the computer stores, shows, magazines, and books have largely disappeared. We buy our computer from an electronics store or an Internet dealer, turn it on, and expect it to work out of the box. As a result, many of us know little more about the internal workings of our PCs than we do about our cars, and computer enthusiasts lament the passing of the golden age. However, this grief is mistaken, for although much has changed, the golden age of personal computers is today richer than ever. Let's look at a few examples.

Creative Writing – In high school and college, I used a manual typewriter and a special, rather greasy-feeling, paper that could be erased. A 1000-word paper was a term project, and each revision required retyping the whole thing. Research involved a trip to the library, and any graphics were done by hand on separate sheets. Now such a task is an afternoon of labor, and most of the time is spent on the content rather than the tedium of putting the characters and graphics on the page.

When I first went to work, engineers wrote on lined pads or coding sheets and sent them to a typing pool or a keypunch room. Some days later, we'd get the result, mark the corrections, and send it back. Major changes required literal cut-and-paste (with scissors and tape). Again, after a few days, we saw the results, often with a new set of typos. This would continue until exhaustion convinced us the result was "good enough." As a result, the average engineer produced about one finished page per day. Word-processing or coding software now corrects mistakes as we go, typing pools and keypunch operators have disappeared, and engineers spend more of their time developing products.

Publishing – Years ago, to create a published work, you typed the text (making liberal use of white-out), and glued it to card stock along with the photos and graphics. You then took these to a printer who photographed the pages and assembled a book or booklet. When I look at my high-school year book, I can clearly see the cellophane tape used to hold down the photos. Today, publishing software with its spelling and grammar checking and sophisticated layout capabilities allows individuals to produce work of much higher quality, and we can send the resulting e-book to as many people as we like. Or we can abandon the book metaphor and

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publish our thoughts on Facebook or a Website, where many examples make my old yearbook look shabby indeed.

Calculation – When I was in college, my calculator was a slide rule, which had an accuracy of two to three significant digits and could only multiply and evaluate simple functions (typically trigonometric). Moreover, it didn't keep track of decimal points, which I had to do manually. Adding required paper and pencil. Plotting the results meant using a drafting board and its associated tools. Now, we have scientific software that not only evaluates formulas, but also performs algebra and calculus and plots the results. Indeed, electronic circuit simulators are available so we don't even have to assemble circuits to measure their responses.

Research – Years ago, the telephone-book yellow pages were about our only source of information about vendors, and product information was delivered by mail. Compared to what is now available on the Internet, these yielded very slim pickings indeed. Instead of having to trek down to a public library (assuming it were open), we can search the Internet from home at any time, where such institutions as the Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/>, and the Vatican, <http://digi.vatlib.it/>, make many of their documents available. True, much of the Internet content is trash, but with relatively little effort, its many treasures can be unearthed.

Entertainment – We are no longer limited to listening to only the local radio stations or reading the local newspapers. Most media sources around the world allow at least limited browsing of their material and maintain archives of their past publications. The problem is not access, but finding the gems hidden in the tons of overburden.

Photography – When I was young, editing photographs required a darkroom, an enlarger, and a chemical kit, costing several thousand of today's dollars, especially if you were using color. The effects, even when implemented by skilled technicians, were crude compared to what we can do today. Video editing was even cruder, as it was limited to cutting film strips and gluing them back together, and the only sound was the projectionist's narration. Today, using software ranging in cost from inexpensive to free, people with far less expertise can achieve truly spectacular effects.

Computer Technology – Today, we can buy very inexpensive, single-board computers, such as the Arduino and Raspberry Pi, and experiment safely with them, since they are separate from our PCs. (They offer the additional advantage of being quite small and cheap, which means that if all else fails we can at least indulge our frustration by throwing them to the floor and stomping on them.) We do our shopping on the Internet and buy from vendors who offer far more variety than was available in any store or show. Both commercial and open-source software is widely available on the Internet, and it's far more sophisticated. Of course, we have to be careful to protect ourselves from malware, but that isn't new.

It's easy to get into a routine with PCs and use them for the same chores every day, instead of exploring new territory like you did when you first discovered them. Take a fresh look at the activities that pique your interest, and you will probably find computer tools to make them more rewarding. Being knowledgeable about computers' abilities and limitation, you have a head start on your search. Exploring such new capabilities requires initiative, because you must install, and of course learn to use effectively, additional software and perhaps hardware. As usual, there are trade-offs between effort and cost, in particular between heavily-advertised commercial programs, which often emphasize ease of use, and open source ones, which often have more features but require more expertise. I prefer the latter, because I can install several, experiment with them, choose those that suit me, and discard the others. I'm less likely to do this if each test requires a new purchase. Regardless of your approach, using a personal computer can inexpensively broaden your interests and improve your skills.

Kretchmar's Korner How to Destroy Your Computer in Just Minutes

Why You Should Avoid Installing PUPS (Potentially Unwanted Programs)

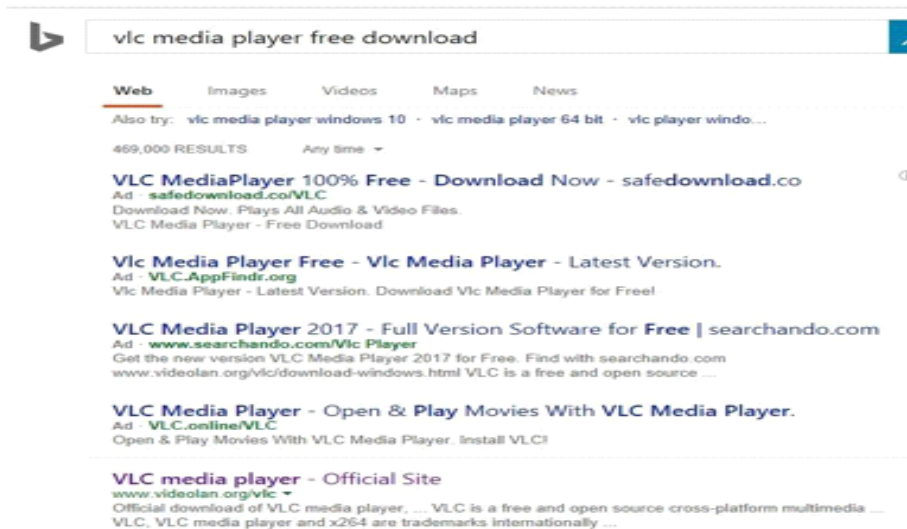
By David Kretchmar, Computer Hardware Technician, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV

April 2017 issue, GigiBytes Gazette

www.scscc.org / tomburt89134 (at) cox.net

There are plenty of new computers being used that are performing much more slowly than they should. One of the quickest ways to turn a fast, new computer into a slow system crippled by malware is to start downloading software from the wrong sites. Or by downloading the wrong software from what appears to be the right site.

Newer computers being slowed by unwanted programs is a bother, but the damage done by PUPs can be much more serious; PUPs can be responsible for programs that make it impossible to access any of your files, or otherwise ruin your system.



Every time you download anything from the Internet you first issue permissions that enable the opening of a conduit or vector between the Internet and your computer. The series of complex events is mostly invisible to you, except for your clicking on that virtual button that starts the whole process.

Bing and Google searches often can take you where you don't want to go. When searching for popular software, sponsored search results (which result in unwanted programs) often appear at the top of the search results page, along with links from the actual software source sites. Often those ad links try to install software on your computer that you do not want. It could be anything; it could be a fake driver update program or a scam system cleaning program. Note that my Bing search for VLC media player (left) first showed 4 sites NOT associated with VLC – bad sites.

Testing Misleading Advertisement links

How bad is it? To find out, I installed a fresh Windows 10, plus all Windows updates, on a freshly formatted hard drive. I downloaded and installed the free version of Avast! Antivirus software that brought a hitchhiker

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of its own - Google Chrome. OK, I wanted Chrome, but not every user would, so I considered this an invasive act by a program I downloaded for protection.

I used Edge, Firefox, and Google Chrome and started using Google and Bing search engines to start searching for popular free programs. The programs I sought are often the first programs that get installed on a PC; Firefox, Google Chrome, OpenOffice, iTunes, Adobe Flash, Java, Adobe Acrobat, VLC, and WinZip. Then, I carelessly clicked on ad results, which appeared above or on the same first page as “real” search results. These paid ads were identified by notes and highlighted in a very pale color to differentiate them (slightly) from the actual search links that appeared nearby.

The ads didn't appear after every search and the ones that appeared varied among searches and were different for different browsers. Sometimes, the first paid ad link actually took me to the software's true source site (i.e. searching for Google offered www.google.com first). Often Avast would block a download it recognized as harmful, but Avast did not catch many problems.

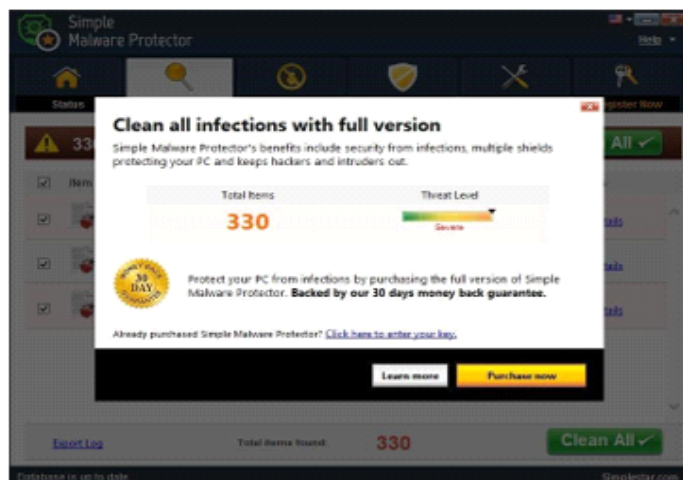
For all of the searched for programs, I was able to bring up more questionable sponsored search results within seconds of repeated searching. Misleading results showed up in all search engines and I could not determine that any browser offered better or worse protection than others.

For each ad link, I clicked through and installed the respective programs via the link or button provided. Instead of delivering just the application I was looking for, all of the paid links attempted to tack on unwanted programs. In some cases, if I was careful to read all of the fine print and uncheck boxes, I could get the files I was looking for without a bunch of extra "added value" software, but it was very difficult.

For the purposes of this article, I acted as an inexperienced user (or an experienced user who's not paying attention), and clicked my way through ads and dialogue boxes that looked like the End User License Agreement (EULA) we're used to seeing through when installing software.

And ... They Got Me!

After installing just a few programs this way, I started accumulating browser toolbars (Bing, Yahoo, and Google), and noticed my search engine and home page had been hijacked to something unwanted. As I continued the process, Windows started slowing down to a crawl.



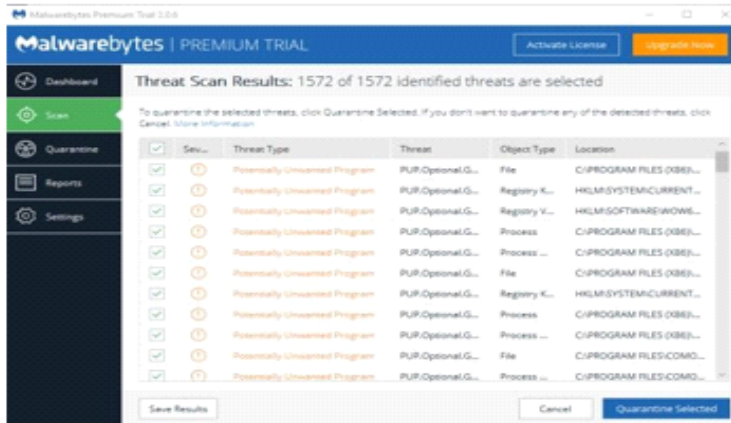
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After installing all of the programs on my list, I opened Windows 10's Programs and Features and each browser's extensions and add-ons and counted 39 items that had been installed in addition to the programs I intended to get. On rebooting, three new programs launched popup windows at startup, including two that started running virus/registry scans as soon as they launched, and a couple that flashed warnings windows and offered fixes if I registered and/or upgraded to the full paid version.

Remember this was originally a clean install of Windows 10 that needed nothing.

Within a few minutes my computer became noticeably slower, plagued by numerous popups, and was becoming essentially unusable.



All of these were nasty, but if even a small fraction of them were, I would be in real trouble.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Most of us will have to download some third-party (non-Microsoft) software from the Internet. This does not have to be dangerous if you pay attention that the software is being offered from the true home site of that product. NEVER download software from any sponsored link, unless the desired software creator is the sponsor.

Do not depend on your anti-malware program to protect you. It will catch some issues, but not all.

Back to Basics The Fun of Using Voice-Controlled Speakers

Jim Cerny, Forum Leader, Sarasota Technology User's Group, FL
March 2017 issue, Sarasota Monitor
www.thestug.org
jimcerny123@gmail.com

There are some new devices out there called "voice activated speakers" and they appeal to many people. The two which seem to be the most popular right now are the "Echo Dot" and "Google Home" but there are others. Most of them are in the price range of \$50 to \$150 (some higher) and they can be very fun to use – a great toy for people of all ages. You could think of this device as an audio (sound, music, voice) web-browser! Yes, you

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talk to it – you tell it what you want to hear, ask a question, or anything else you can think of. These devices listen to your verbal commands and will try to do whatever you want. This device uses your Wi-Fi connection to access the internet. Since the device is a speaker, your answers are audio, not video.

Voice recognition has been around for several years now, on my iPhone it is called “Siri” and on my Windows computer, it is called “Cortana”. We recently bought an “Echo Dot” which has a voice named “Alexa” (about \$50) and have been enjoying it (her) very much. I believe the trick to enjoying a device like this is to TRY it – ask it lots of questions and learn what it can do and what it cannot. Open your mind, don’t limit your thinking to just asking for music, although music is certainly a good way to begin enjoying your smart speaker.

Here are some things you can try to ask your speaker:

- What is the weather like in Chicago?
- What is 5,283 times 7?
- Tell me about Lady Gaga.
- What is on my calendar today?
- Play some Perry Como hits.
- What is the address of Gecko’s in Sarasota?

Sometimes it is hard to find a good fun “toy” for someone and these smart speakers can be fun for anyone – from tots to seniors. If you are interested, why not ask someone who has one and try asking it some questions. I think you will be pleasantly surprised!

Customer Support by Erica

Dan Douglas, President, Space Coast PC Users Group, FL
April 2017 issue, PC Journal
www.scpcug.org
ringram28 (at) cfl.rr.com

My daughter Erica was visiting this week and I told her that sometimes I get stumped on what to write for the journal each month. She came up with what I think was a great idea – what actually happens when you call a Customer Support line and how to make those calls more effective for you to get the help that you need. I spent most of my career working on software to log the critical parts of a customer call for service and she reviews and manages people who actually take those calls at an AT&T call center. Here’s Erica’s take on Customer Service and how to get better results!

You know that message when you call customer service that says the call “may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance”? My job is to listen to those calls and give feedback to customer service agents and their management about areas to improve and where they excel. So yes, someone really does listen!

Calling in to customer service or tech support is never how you want to spend your day, but there are a few things that you can do to help make sure the person you’re talking to gives you the best service they can. So here are a few tips to make your next call go as smoothly as possible.

1 – Don’t skip the automated voice or you will need to be prepared to be transferred. No one likes to navigate all the options the automated system gives you, and the voice recognition can be frustrating, but giving it as

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much information as you can rather than just skipping it can make your call shorter and better. It will get you to a department you need, or where there is an account matching information you provide, and it will often (but not always) auto-load that information for the person who answers your call. If you do skip it, be patient with the person who answers and understand that they may have to transfer you – be clear about what department you need or what services you have, so as to waste as little time and save as much bother as possible.

2 – Know your information, and give what is asked. You may want to go straight into telling your agent what the problem is, or vent about how long it has been happening, but there are a few things the agent must do before they can really help, the most important of which is to find your account. If the person is asking only for your name or security question, then they probably have your account loaded up thanks to you taking time with the Interactive Voice Recognition system (IVR) or the robot as we call it, but they need to confirm it's right before they can start making changes or troubleshooting. If they ask for your account number, let them know if you don't have it, and ask what other information they can use to find you. If you have phone or email services with the company you're calling, that's what they would normally use to contact you; that's probably the information they need.

3 – Be patient and try not to ramble. You may hear long periods of silence, or the phrase "I am just running some tests" which is a favorite in the tech support calls. It can be hard to wait this out, if you are the customer, when you're mad that it's the 2nd time your internet has gone out today. But this time is when your support agent is checking your account, letting their system check for damage in the area or other reported problems, and when they are figuring out what steps to do next. If silence goes on for longer than a minute, feel free to ask for an update, but if you are talking the entire time, it will be harder for the agent to concentrate on their job.

4 – Leave honest feedback, good or bad. You might be offered a supervisor or ask to speak to one, or you might get a survey email or text after your call. This data is crucial for the company to figure out if there are patterns of good or bad service, and figure out how to give you more of what you like. Ratings of your satisfaction with the result, the wait time, and the service are good points of reference for the company and service as a whole. If you have the option for a short-answer or a free response, that is the best place to give your specific thoughts about the agent you worked with rather than the company as a whole, that section usually goes to the agent's supervisor and is a big part of how they are evaluated.

Back to the Basics **Easy Spreadsheets for Home Finances**

By Jim Cerny, Forum Leader, Sarasota Technology User's Group, FL
May 2017 issue, Sarasota Monitor
www.thestug.org
[jimcerny123 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:jimcerny123@gmail.com)

Tax time has come and gone and this is always a good time to review your financial status. Over the years I have found that two easy spreadsheets have helped me a great deal in keeping track of my finances and I would like to share them with you. It is important that you know that it is NOT difficult to keep a spreadsheet, especially if you are only doing basic calculations. My first spreadsheet tracks all my expenses, month by month,

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and the other spreadsheet tracks my investments, also monthly. (See the two samples with this article – I am showing only three months instead of twelve, but you will get the idea).

By using these two spreadsheets I can easily see what bills I have paid (or not), the past amounts paid for each, and I can see those quarterly or annual payments as well. For my investments status, I can see the amount and percent gain/loss each month and the overall gain/loss for the year. Color shading of the rows of cells in each spreadsheet is very helpful, easy to do, and makes the data easy to view. All “formulas” that I use are only totals, differences from the previous month column, and percentages. Really easy stuff for a spreadsheet!

The only spreadsheet “skills” that you need to know for all of this are listed here, and you can find instructions by looking them up on Google:

- a) Merge cells to create titles on your spreadsheet that span multiple columns. This makes the spreadsheet look nice.
- b) Enter a number (dollar amount) in a cell.
- c) Enter text into a cell.
- d) Color a background to a cell, row, or column.
- e) Enter a summation formula in the bottom cell to add all the cells in that column above.
The formula: SUM(b2:b15) will add all the values in the cells in column B from B2 through B15.
This formula should be entered in the last cell in the column which would be B16 in this example.
- f) Just change the numbers to add the cells you want.
- g) Add and/or delete a row or column of cells.

And that’s about it. Of course, there is always more to learn if you want, but just these skills will work just fine for the basics.

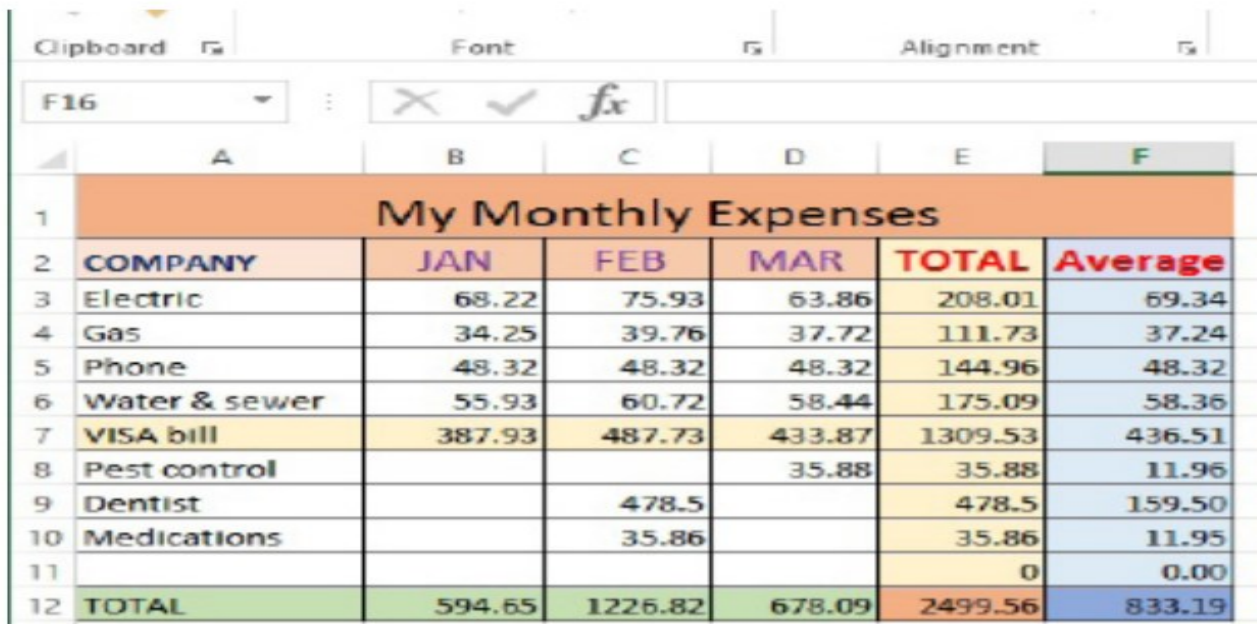
Let’s begin with my “Monthly Expenses” spreadsheet and how you can modify it to suit your situation. I have each billing company or organization in the first column “a,” followed by a column for each month across the sheet “b” through “m,” twelve months. The last column on the right “n” is a total column.

Basically, I have grouped my bills that come due each and every month at the top of the sheet, followed by those bills I consistently pay by credit card (a different color). These are then followed by those odd bills, the ones I pay quarterly or annually, and one-time bills such as for home improvements, etc. Don’t forget to keep your medical bills clearly indicated in another color too. Usually it is a good idea to use your charge card for many bills because you can separate out the medical, food, and other charges as you need to for tax purposes. I usually do not track my cash payments out of my pocket (lunches, misc. expenses, etc.) but I DO track how much I take out from the bank in cash for those expenses. By looking across each row I can see how that bill went up or down and how much I have been using in gas or electric, etc. If my water bill jumps up, for example, maybe I have a leak or maybe I just filled up my pool too much. At the end of the year I can see how much I paid, total and monthly average, for all my expenses.

For my “Financial Status” or “Investments” spreadsheet I do pretty much the same thing, one row across for each investment or account, and a column for each month. I enter the numbers into the spreadsheet based upon my monthly account statements. On my example, I have one row that is all negative as it is a loan or debt. The rows at the bottom contain the totals and the percent difference (up or down) from the previous month. Whenever you enter a new number in a cell, the totals, averages, and percentages are all automatically calculated for you. The column at the far right tells me the percentage gain/loss for the year so far for each investment.

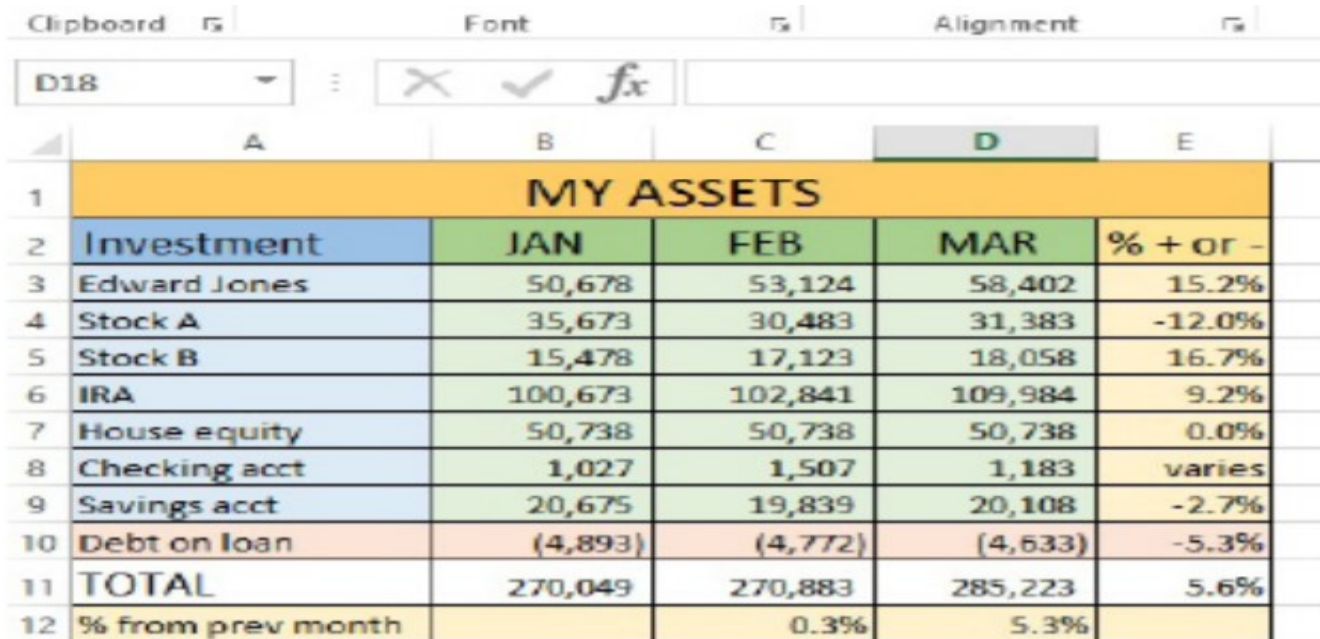
(Continued from page 12)

Remember you can just add more rows as you need. It fits nicely on my computer screen and, if I print it out in “landscape” mode, it looks great. Learning how to use the basics of a spreadsheet is a great way to find out if spreadsheets can help you in other areas as well. There is free spreadsheet software on Google Drive and Open Office, and free help on using them on Google and YouTube. Why not give it a try? – it’s a lot easier than keeping written records by hand!



My Monthly Expenses					
COMPANY	JAN	FEB	MAR	TOTAL	Average
Electric	68.22	75.93	63.86	208.01	69.34
Gas	34.25	39.76	37.72	111.73	37.24
Phone	48.32	48.32	48.32	144.96	48.32
Water & sewer	55.93	60.72	58.44	175.09	58.36
VISA bill	387.93	487.73	433.87	1309.53	436.51
Pest control			35.88	35.88	11.96
Dentist		478.5		478.5	159.50
Medications		35.86		35.86	11.95
				0	0.00
TOTAL	594.65	1226.82	678.09	2499.56	833.19

Figure 1: Monthly Expense Spreadsheet example



MY ASSETS				
Investment	JAN	FEB	MAR	% + or -
Edward Jones	50,678	53,124	58,402	15.2%
Stock A	35,673	30,483	31,383	-12.0%
Stock B	15,478	17,123	18,058	16.7%
IRA	100,673	102,841	109,984	9.2%
House equity	50,738	50,738	50,738	0.0%
Checking acct	1,027	1,507	1,183	varies
Savings acct	20,675	19,839	20,108	-2.7%
Debt on loan	(4,893)	(4,772)	(4,633)	-5.3%
TOTAL	270,049	270,883	285,223	5.6%
% from prev month		0.3%	5.3%	

Figure 1: Investment Spreadsheet example

The Laptop that couldn't keep its colors straight

By Sandy Shapiro, Member, Under the Computer Hood UG, CA
April 2017 issue, Drive Light
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I have an Acer Chromebook – a nice little laptop. It's a little over one year old, which means it is out of warranty.

The other day when I logged into my Google account, the screen colors reversed putting white letters on a black screen instead of the normal black on white. Something has gotten corrupted, I thought, but how to trouble shoot this?

First step is to look into the settings adjustments. There I found things for screen saver, Bluetooth and other unhelpful settings. Time for a Google search. No joy there, either, but I did find out how to do some diagnostics (hold down the ESC and refresh keys and press the power button).

Error message: "Chrome OS is missing or damaged!" filled the screen. Aha, I thought, this must be the problem. After more searching, I found a web site where I could download a recovery operating system to a thumb drive, insert the thumb drive in my laptop, and restore the OS. That didn't take long, and at least the error message went away, but as soon as I logged into my account, screwy colors again.

One Google guru opined that the laptop had a bad screen, but I didn't know how much I wanted to invest in repairing such an inexpensive computer. Time for another opinion. I called "Laptops4Every1," a laptop repair service in Pacific Beach.

David, the "laptop fixer," turned the computer on, went into the settings dialog, and clicked on something called "Accessibility." That brought up another dialog box where he clicked on "High Contrast."

Lo and behold, the colors were back to normal. David charged me \$20 for his service.

I don't know why my laptop suddenly turned on High Contrast, nor do I know how many other Acer machines will suddenly decide to take colors into their own hands, but I'm glad I found a quick fix, and I'm sorry I didn't push my exploratory curiosity a bit further and check out that setting.

Of course, now that I know what to look for, Google, I found, has a lot of information on using High Contrast. Well, I learn something new every day, and while some lessons can be expensive, this one turned out to be not too bad.



PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP, Inc.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

☐ **New Member** ☐ **Renewing Member**

Return this application, with check for annual dues payable to "PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP." Return to the club Treasurer during our meeting or mail to PPCUG Treasurer. P.O. Box 3787, Crossville, TN 38557. Our annual dues are now payable on July 1st of each year. Annual dues are \$24 per single person / \$30 per family starting 7/1/2014 with partial years' dues as follows:

Due Date	Jul-Sep 2017 Annual Dues	Oct-Dec 2017	Jan-Mar 2018	Apr-Jun 2018
Single:	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6
Families:	\$30	\$22	\$15	\$7

Date: _____ Amount Paid: \$ ____ :00, by Cash ____, or Check (# _____)

Last Name First Name Family Members (if family membership)

Address:

City State Zip Code Phone Number

E-Mail address: _____

I have belonged to a Computer Club before. Yes _____ No _____

I have used PCs since (year): _____


I have knowledge in the following areas that I would be willing to share with club members:

June 2017



September 2017



<u>Sun</u>	<u>Mon</u>	<u>Tue</u>	<u>Wed</u>	<u>Thu</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Sat</u>
					1	2
3	4 Labor Day 	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 2:00 P.M. PPCUG Board Mtg.	14 1:00 P.M. Photo Editing Workshop Club Mtg.	15	16
17	18 6:00 P.M. General Mtg. Presentation. Followed By Q&A Session	19	20	21 1:00 P.M. Plateau Photography Club Mtg.	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Note: Please see page #15 for the Plateau PC Users Group, Inc. [Application for Membership form.](#)