

Bits of Bytes

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO

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The Prez Sez

by Cary Quinn, President, P*PCompAS

Well the winter breezes have finally started to catch up with us. But we can look forward to coffee, donuts, and a rousing discussion of technology topics at the next P*PCompAS General meeting.

The programs committee is working on a few ideas from local presenters, TBD; otherwise we will have a short presentation on tech tips for the holidays. ☺



Meeting Minutes

by Toni Logan,
Secretary,
P*PCompAS

President Cary Quinn called the 5 November 2016 meeting to order at about 9 am. There were no guests attending this meeting. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the newsletter was moved, seconded, and passed.

OFFICER REPORTS

Treasurer Bill Gardner reported that the club had a total of \$6116.50

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 3 December 2016

The program committee is working on presentation topics, or there may be a short presentation on tech tips.

in the treasury. This included interest and one membership fee.

Membership Chairwoman Ann Titus reported that she is accepting dues for next year.

Editor Greg Lenihan said that the deadline for the next newsletter is Saturday, November 19, 2016. He handed out extra printed copies of the newsletter.

APCUG Representative Joe Nuvolini said that the dues of \$50.00 are due for the next year.

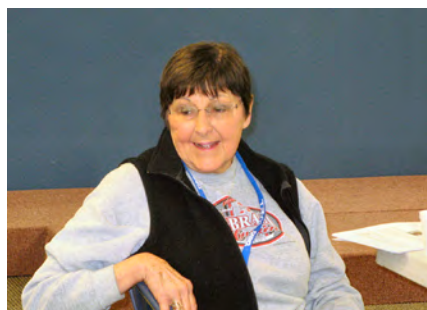
OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

Nominations are open for President. There were none from the floor. If you are interested, please contact the President, Cary Quinn.

PROGRAM

Ilene Steinkruger and Joe Nuvolini gave us a presentation of their observations at the International Technology Conference held in Las Vegas.



Ilene Steinkruger beginning her presentation on the APCUG Conference attended in October.

DRAWING

Game—Pat Krieger

Firewire cable—Peter Rallis

Digital Adapter—Toni Logan ☺

Attention XP and Vista Users

Google recently announced that the [Google Drive desktop utility](#) would cease support for Windows XP, Vista, and Server 2003 beginning January 1, 2017. This is the second major desktop-cloud sync program to dump older versions of Windows after Dropbox did so in April.

Unlike Dropbox, Google isn't turning off Google Drive for the desktop. As long as you have the utility up and running on an XP and Vista computer before January 1, 2017 you can continue to use it. As with Dropbox, you can continue using the website version of Google Drive. ☺

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Officers

President: Cary Quinn
cary.quinn@gmail.com

Vice President: Harvey McMinn
harveys_homes@yahoo.com

Secretary: Toni Logan
bradtonlogan@gmail.com

Treasurer: Bill Gardner
wgplace@comcast.net

Staff

APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini

Editor: Greg Lenihan
Librarian: Paul Godfrey
Membership: Ann Titus

Committees

Hospitality: Pat Krieger
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Samsung wrote the program Kies to provide a way to backup Android devices and for use transferring data between devices. Kies worked with devices running Android 4.3 (Jelly Bean) and earlier. Kies was updated to v3 and worked with Android 4.4 (Kit Kat) and later. Unfortunately, Kies 3 did not function correctly with Android 6.0 (Marshmallow). Enter Samsung Smart Switch which can be used with Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich) and later.

There are two programs: Smart Switch for Windows and Mac, and Smart Switch Mobile for devices. You can read more about Smart Switch and download the PC software [here](#). Even though Windows 10 is not included in the system requirements, the program works correctly in Win 10. The device application is downloaded at the Play Store.

Smart Switch will handle the backup/restore of Android devices, phones, tablets, or phablets. Like Kies, Smart Switch can do software updates on your device. Here are a few screen shots taken while doing a backup of my Galaxy Tab S tablet. The initial

Nybbles and Bits

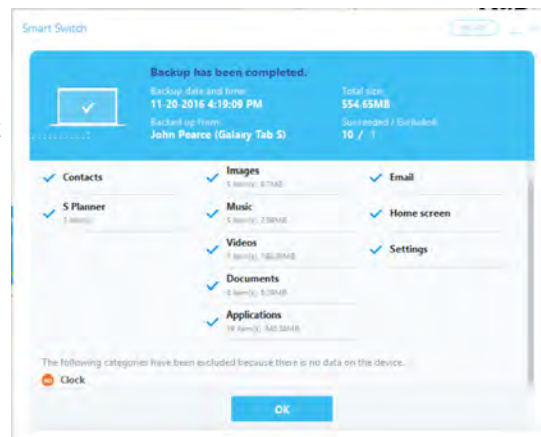
by John Pearce, P*PCompAS

display identifies the connected device and the three main options:



Backup, Restore, and Outlook Sync. Other program options are displayed by clicking on MORE.

There is an option to include the SD card, if present, in the backup. If you store photos or other files on the SD card, you might want to include it in the backup, or copy the photos/files separately to a backup device. When the backup is complete, a summary screen is shown. Files with the checkmark are included in the backup data. In the example below, there is no data for the Clock application.



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P*PCompAS welcomes any comments, letters, or articles from members and non-members alike. Please send any articles to the editor (see last page for address). The editor reserves the right to reject, postpone, or edit for space, style, grammar, and clarity of any material submitted.

How to Use VPN on a Public Network

by Kim Komando (tip from 10/5/16)

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Public Wi-Fi networks at coffee shops, fast food chains and airports can be lifesavers when you're in a pinch. You can check social media sites and email, browse the internet, shop and communicate online without putting a dent in your cellular data plan. [Use this free app to find Wi-Fi anywhere you go.](#)

Unfortunately, if an opportunistic hacker is on the same network, it gives them a good chance of snooping on what you're doing or even taking over your accounts.

Aside from hackers, the government and internet service providers can also monitor your connection to see where you go, and, if they want, what you do. If you aren't a fan of that, and few people are, there is a way you can keep these parties out of your

business.

If you're on public Wi-Fi, consider using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to secure and encrypt your connection.

What is VPN?


In the business world, VPNs let remote off-site employees create an encrypted connection with their company network so they can work safely.

Windows and Mac both have VPN features built in for this purpose. However, for the average home user or traveler, these aren't very helpful because you need a network to connect to. That's where a third-party VPN service comes in handy.

A VPN service lets you create an encrypted connection with one of its

servers, and you use that server to browse the Internet. The connection is encrypted through the server, so the VPN can't see your traffic either. OK, it's a bit more complicated than that behind the scenes, but that's the result.

To start, you need to choose a program or service to use. There are dozens that offer a variety of security features, privacy options, server locations and other considerations.

 **Note:** If you're searching for VPNs, you'll see VPN services and "proxy" services. A proxy service can disguise your computer's identity, but it doesn't necessarily encrypt your connection. Always go with a VPN for security.

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Nybbles (Continued from page 2)

The backup data files are found in "C:\Users\<user name>\Documents\Samsung\SmartSwitch\backup\<device model>\<backup name>". The <backup name> folder contains the device model followed by the date time of the backup. Within the <backup name> folder

are the folders and files for the backup data.

Additional program options are shown by clicking MORE on the main screen. One of the options is Preferences where the backup folder location, encryption, and data to include in the backup can be changed. In addition, backups can be deleted in Preferences. ☺



There was a decent digerati turnout at the November breakfast despite being so close to Thanksgiving. With so many interests in common, many may find it is better than a meal with related family.



VPN (Continued from page 3)

For the average user, it's important to make sure the service has U.S.-based servers, know how much bandwidth you can use per session or month, and to know that it doesn't keep logs of your activity. Paid services will require some personal information and payment information, naturally, but you can find one that minimizes what it needs to know.

Some services will accept prepaid cards and alternative payments that are more difficult to trace back to you. However, even if you give the service your information, as long as it doesn't keep logs of what you do with the service, then it doesn't matter so much.

For PCs, Macs and Android smartphones and tablets, [CyberGhost](#) is a popular free option that has strong encryption, unlimited bandwidth and doesn't store logs. If you decide on a paid plan, there's an Apple app as well, plus you get access to more servers around the world.

[Hotspot Shield VPN](#) is a good app for Apple and Android gadgets and has more than 300 million downloads. You get to choose your server location, and it also blocks viruses and phishing attempts before they get to your gadget. There are also Windows and Mac versions; however, the free software has ads.

Exclusively available for Apple MacOS and iOS is another VPN service called [Cloak](#). With this application, just mark certain networks as "trusted" and it will automatically secure your connection whenever you're not in one of them. Cloak's service is not free; it offers two monthly subscriptions: a 5 GB mini plan for \$2.99 and an unlimited data plan for \$9.99. You can try it out for free for 14 days.

Using a VPN

Once you've installed your

VPN of choice, fire it up and let it establish a connection. You can then browse the Internet like you always do. The traffic will flow to your computer, tablet or smartphone over the encrypted connection from the VPN's server.

This means any unencrypted sites you visit will be safe from prying eyes and encrypted sites will basically have double encryption. As a side bonus, if you're at home, your internet service provider will no longer be able to see what sites you're visiting. It will only see your connection to the VPN.

The sites you're visiting also won't know where you're coming from. They'll just see the connection from the VPN. That means the government will have a harder time tracking what you're doing as well.

Disclaimer: While the government will have a harder time seeing your activity, it isn't impossible that it can find out what you're doing. So, keep what you're doing legal.

I strongly recommend using a VPN when you're on public Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi makes it easy for hackers on the same network to snoop on what you're doing. The VPN encryption should stop them.

Even then, you shouldn't do anything too sensitive on public Wi-Fi, like online banking. Save that for home on your secure Wi-Fi network, or use a cellular connection on the go. Even with cellular, you might want to use a VPN in case you wander in range of a government StingRay. [Learn what StingRays are and why you want to avoid them](#).

More Things to Know

Using a VPN is a good way to increase your security, but it does have a cost. While most VPN services claim otherwise, it can slow down your connection. That's because your traffic is making more stops between you and the site you're using. If you find that your

browsing is sluggish, you can turn off the VPN while using sites that aren't critical.

You could run into obstacles if your VPN hooks you up with a server in another country. Some online activities, like streaming online videos, are often region locked. So if you find YouTube, Netflix or another site refusing to play videos because it says you aren't in the U.S., you'll need to adjust your VPN settings or find one with more U.S.-based servers.

Similarly, some sites that you use regularly might say they don't recognize you. You might need to go through security procedures to prove you are who you say you are before you can log in.

While the VPN will hide your surfing from your ISP and the sites you're visiting, your computer, smartphone or tablet are still recording your browsing history. If you don't want that recorded, you'll need to browse in private or incognito mode. [Learn how to activate that in your browser](#).

A VPN is just about the connection between you and a website. If you choose to store personal information on a website, it can still be lost in a data breach. So, as always, be conscious of what sites you choose to trust with your information.

While a VPN encrypts your connection between you and the VPN server, the connection between the VPN server and the site you're visiting isn't necessarily going to be secure. While the odds of a hacker breaking in at that point are minimal, it's still possible.

Always be sure to check your browser's address bar to make sure you see the "https://" before sending any sensitive information to a website. If a site doesn't offer an encrypted connection for sensitive information, then you probably don't want to be using it, VPN or not. ☺

The Best Free Ways to Share Photos With Friends and Family (Other Than Facebook)

By Jason Fitzpatrick, reprinted with permission from HowToGeek.com

Original article at: <http://www.howtogeek.com/133062/the-best-free-ways-to-share-photos-with-friends-and-family-other-than-facebook/>



Facebook might be the default platform for sharing photos, but that doesn't mean it's the only free and easy to use option out there. Here are some other solid photo sharing options to make it easy to share photos with friends and family the way you want to.

The biggest thing to keep in mind while reviewing our picks to think not about selecting the one with the absolute best features, but about picking the one that will be the easiest for your friends and family to use. When it comes to family photo sharing, the deal breakers aren't usually the little features, but whether or not everyone will adopt using the service in the first place.

With that in mind, we've placed special emphasis on ease of use for each of our recommendations with a primary focus on photo-centered services, including key details that are particularly important when sharing with friends and family like: whether or not the viewer needs an account to use the service, how easy it is to organize your photos, how photos are uploaded (and if they are stored at full resolution and quality), and so on.

Instagram

If you're looking for an easy to use alternative to Facebook in terms of simple photo sharing with a social media feel, [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/) is a logical alternative. (Yes, we know it's owned by Facebook, but for now, it's a separate service—and one much more focused on photos.)

The service is completely free, easy to install and setup on your mobile device, and while Instagram may have made a name for itself in terms of hashtags and public photos, it's very easy to set your account to private (which you should do right from the start!) and use it only to share with friends—effectively creating a tiny

photo-centered social network just for the people you care about. On the downside, the private account feature only works if everyone has an account, which means your whole band of friends and family have to sign up if you wish to keep your photos private. Further, if the people you're sharing with want a traditional look-at-albums experience, Instagram isn't it, as photos flow down the feed and looking at old photos requires lengthy scrolling.

While your photos are uploaded to Instagram at full resolution, they are not displayed at full resolution, nor is there any built-in way for the viewer to save the photos at all—which might be an issue for grandparents hungry for physical photos to put on the fridge. Additionally, if your primary photo workflow is more of a sit-down-at-your-PC one (as opposed to snapping pics on the go and uploading them right from the park where your kids are playing), you'll probably want to skip Instagram altogether. Instagram has been, and remains, a mobile app, and the only official way to upload photos to Instagram is via their mobile app. The desktop site is...lacking, to say the least.

Best for: People who want a social media experience centered around photo sharing.

Flickr

[Flickr](https://www.flickr.com/) remains one of the highest profile photo sharing sites on the Internet, and with good reason: the entire service is oriented around high quality photo sharing, and the free tier of the service has a lot to offer. A free Flickr account will get you 1TB of storage (more than even most prolific shutterbugs could fill up in years of shooting) as well as flexible privacy settings. Photos are uploaded and stored at full resolution, and you can easily configure your account so the viewers are able to download the full resolution photos (or at home printing or sending them off to a photo service).

Your friends and family can either sign up for a free Flickr account (and you can use their Flickr username to manage their access to your photos) or you can share individual photos, albums, or even your entire photo stream through a guest user pass delivered to them via e-mail. By default, Flickr photos are public (unsurprising given Flickr's history as one of the earliest photo sharing platforms) so be sure to pay attention to privacy settings before uploading your personal photos.

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Share Photos (Continued from page 5)

Best for: Photography enthusiasts who want to mix hobby and family time—you get plenty of storage for both your hobby projects as well as sharing albums with family.

Google Photos

Previously known as Picasa Web Albums, [Google Photos](#) is a pretty appealing option thanks to the unlimited storage for photos under 16 megapixels (which make up the vast majority of snapshots taken by home photographers) and ease of sharing. Your photos are uploaded in their full resolution and [once shared with friends and family](#) (via a mobile number or e-mail address), they can be downloaded in the same resolution. Furthermore, you can give those same people upload rights to your album which makes it useful for gathering together all, say, the family Christmas party photos in one place from all the different photographers in the group.

Google Photos is one of the services we recommended [in our guide to bulletproof photo backup](#) thanks to the cost and how easily you can automate your mobile and desktop photo backups. Add in the ease of sharing with friends and family, and you've got a compelling option that both secures and privately shares your photos.

Best for: People with lots of photos on their PCs *and* phones. Google Photos for mobile devices and the Google Photos uploader make automatic uploading of all your photos a snap regardless of where they're stored.

Amazon Photos

If you're one of the 63 million Amazon Prime subscribers, you've got a solid photo backup and sharing system right at your fingertips (even if you didn't realize it). [Amazon Photos](#) gives you unlimited full-resolution photo backup, the ability to add up to five family members to their "Family Vault" to collect and share photos, and—like Google Photos—you can also share individual photos or albums by e-mail or a shareable link, no Amazon account needed.

With their shared access, they can upload photos (if they're part of the Family Vault) or download your photos at full resolution for personal printing. Amazon Photos includes competitively priced print ordering (including photo products like photo books and holiday cards) right through Amazon with free delivery. If you're already a Prime member, it's almost foolish not to take advantage of this membership

perk.

Best for: People with Prime accounts that want to maximize the value they get out of their Prime Subscription and offer easy photo pooling for family members.

Photobucket

For readers who are most interested in sharing photos in a way that makes it dead simple for the recipients to order prints, [Photobucket](#) is a worthwhile option. While it's a bit light on storage in the free tier (you only get 2GB free plus an 8GB bonus if you install the Photobucket mobile app), it works well as a place to put your best pictures.

What Photobucket lacks in terms of storage and extra features (like albums multiple family members can contribute to), it absolutely makes up for in ease of use for physical prints. Your family members will be able to not only easily download the original images without an account (just using the shared link to your password protected album), but also order both prints and even photo products. If grandma wants a mug with Junior's face on it, she won't have to bug you to make that happen.

We do have one strong word of caution about Photobucket, though. For some inexplicable reason, the default setting on a new Photobucket account is public (even though Photobucket doesn't have the same public sharing vibe that Instagram and Flickr do), and if you don't set your account to private in the privacy settings before you begin uploading your photos, then they're simply out there for the world, accessible to anyone—definitely take a moment to dig around in the settings before you jump right into filling up the default "bucket" with your photos.

Best for: People who want a photo storage/printing service that allows the user and guests to download full resolution photos.

Shutterfly

Like the premise of Photobucket (easy sharing + easy printing), but want a little more bang in your free account? Consider [Shutterfly](#) like Photobucket on steroids. First, Shutterfly offers unlimited photo storage—the promise to [never delete a photo unless the customer deletes it](#) is a prominent part of their business model.

Second, not only can you easily share albums with your friends and family through the same method we've seen repeatedly throughout this list—e-mailing them a shared link—but you can also create a format website for your shared

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3 Handy Built-In Windows Tools

by Kim Komando (tip from 11/3/16)

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If you're using Windows 10, you're probably discovering many of its useful, newer features. For example, the look of Windows 10 is a bit different from its predecessor, Windows 8.

The Start menu still has tiles that were found in Windows 8. However, there are also Start menu features from earlier versions of Windows that people have been missing, like a pop-up menu of your computer programs.

You can even customize Start by moving tiles around, or adding ones that you want while deleting the ones you don't. There's also a tab at the bottom of the page, Search the Web and Windows, to search the Internet or your own saved files, right from the taskbar.

Even better is the fact that there are hundreds of built-in tools and functions in Windows that are designed to make everyday tasks easier. Unfortunately, many users don't even know these features exist and elect to use a third-party app.

With that in mind, we're going to tell you about three Windows tools that you might not know exist that will come in handy.

Windows Event Viewer

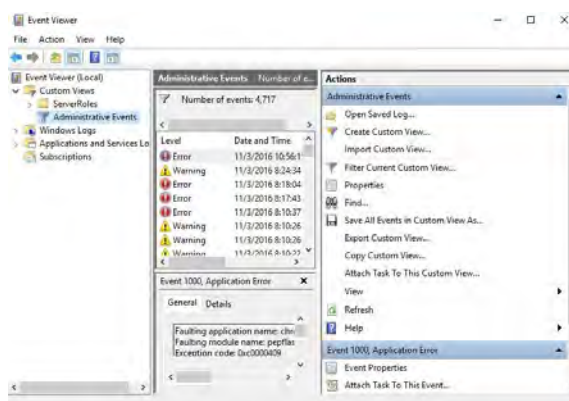
You can access a complete record of all events on your PC with

Windows Event Viewer. This tool will show you all Windows services that have been accessed, as well as logins, errors, and warnings. This is helpful when you're having a problem with your PC. You are able to see all data that will help detect problems or any other activity.

To access the Windows Event Viewer, go to Control Panel >> System and Security >> Administrative Tools >> Event Viewer.

An easier way to access the Event Viewer is to simply press the Windows + R keys. Type "eventvwr" in the "Run" dialog box. This will open the Event Viewer.

Once you have the Event Viewer open, double-click on the Custom Views folder on the left-hand side of the screen. Then click on Administrative Events. This will show you a list of all errors and warnings.



Unless you are actually experiencing a problem with your PC, there's no need to explore the errors and warnings. Windows sometimes creates error or warning entries in the Event Viewer, even if there isn't a problem.

If there is a problem with your PC, double-click on the error or warning that appears in the Event Viewer at the time of the issue. This will give more details of the event in question along with solutions to fix it.

System Information

Knowing the system information of a PC is important. Especially if you are trying to troubleshoot a problem or selling the PC and need to list its specs.

The System Information tool shows you all of the hardware and software details of a PC.

To see the System Information, go to Control Panel >> System and Security >> Administrative Tools >> System Information.

An easier way to access System Information is to simply press the Windows + R keys. Type "msinfo32" in the "Run" dialog box. This will open System Information.

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Share Photos (Continued from page 6)

photos with a vanity url like fitzpatrickphotos.shutterfly.com. The only downside to the custom site route is that the only way to make it private is if all users have a Shutterfly account. One ding against Shutterfly is that, unlike the rest of the services listed here sans Instagram, [there's no way for the user or guests to download the full resolution files.](#)

Finally, it's dead simple, regardless of which sharing method you use, for your family members to easily order both prints and any of the numerous photo products from Shutterfly.

Best for: People who want unlimited photo storage combined with a very large print/product marketplace for ease of ordering. ☺

What is a “Microsoft Account?”

By Leo Notenboom, <https://newsletter.askleo.com>; published under the Creative Commons License

A Microsoft account is almost any account you have with Microsoft, and there's a high likelihood you already have one.

Windows 10 wants me to use a “Microsoft account”. I've had a Hotmail account for years, is that the same? Different? Do I need to create yet another account to keep track of?

Many people are confused by the concept of a “Microsoft account.” Microsoft introduced it around the time of Windows 8; with the arrival of Windows 10, they're pushing the concept even harder.

I've long held that Microsoft just doesn't do product names well, but in this case, they had no choice. They needed a term for a more general concept.

Your Hotmail account already is a Microsoft account – as are many, many other accounts. That's where people are getting confused.

You Probably Already Have One

If you have an e-mail address that can be used to log in to Outlook.com, that's a Microsoft account.

What that means is that almost any e-mail address ever provided to you by Microsoft is, already, a Microsoft account. Those include e-mail addresses ending in:

- hotmail.com
- outlook.com
- msn.com
- live.com
- webtv.com

... and probably a few others I've missed.

Over more than twenty years, Microsoft has offered a number of services that involved using an e-mail address they provided. All of those are now Microsoft accounts.

So What's a Microsoft Account?

Now that you know you have one, what is it?

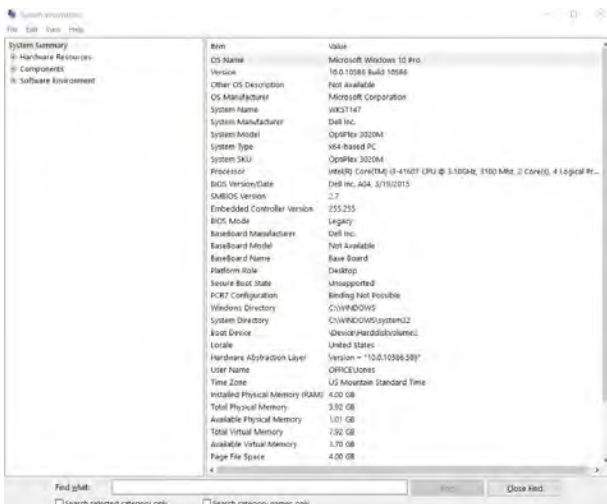
The short version is this: it's a single account you use to access any and all Microsoft services. Since Windows 8, you can also use it as your Windows login.



You can have more than one if you like – perhaps to keep some services separate from others – or to keep your Windows login separate from your online identity. Just go to a Microsoft online service like Outlook.com, sign out, and then begin the new-account creation process as if you didn't already have one.

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Windows Tools (Continued from page 7)



With System Information, you will see all of the important details of the PC. BIOS type, RAM, Virtual RAM, OS information and the processor are all listed.

Memory Diagnostics

Windows has a Memory Diagnostic tool that will let you know how the RAM of your PC is working. This tool scans your PC, looking for any memory problems and lets you know if it finds issues.

If you decide to run Memory Diagnostic, make sure to save all of your work ahead of time. This tool scans your PC after restarting it, so you don't want to lose any unsaved work.

To run Memory Diagnostic, press the Windows + R keys >> type “mdsched.exe” and hit enter. You will be asked if you want to “Restart” now and scan the PC. Select yes and your PC will restart and Memory Diagnostic will begin. You can also choose to run it the next time you restart your PC if you'd rather wait for a later time.

You will see the diagnostic report after the tool finishes its scan.

These are just a few of the handy tools built into Windows. ☺

What's New: Ripple Coffee Maker

By George Harding, Tuscon Computer Society, www.aztcs.org, [georgehardingsbd \(at\) earthlink.net](mailto:georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net)

One of the most unusual products at CES was demonstrated by a coffee maker!

The result is a cup of coffee with an image floating on the surface of the coffee. It has to be a latte, cappuccino, or other foam-based beverage in order to show the image. It's called Ripple and I saw it at a booth at CES. In fact, I was served a latte with an image of the Mona Lisa floating on the surface!

The first step is to make a latte, or whatever. The second step is to download an image of just about any sort to a machine that does the "engraving." The result is your image in the foam of the latte.

It's a unique operation and, while interesting, doesn't seem to have much in the way of actual use, outside of being an unusual offering at parties.

They are currently processing orders for customers in the U.S. and Canada.

The Ripple Effect

<http://www.coffeeriipples.com/> ☺



MS Acct (Conti. from page 8)

Creating a new Outlook.com account is, in fact, creating a new Microsoft account, which happens to use e-mail addresses ending in "outlook.com" as your login ID.

One Incredibly Important Ramification

One of the more common questions I get is how to close a Hotmail account (or an Outlook.com account, or an MSN account, and so on).

People get frustrated with something – perhaps the amount of spam they're getting, or sometimes they're trying to stop e-mail from a particularly nasty sender. I get it. Closing an account *seems* like the way to solve problem.

Unfortunately, what most people don't realize is that you're not just closing your e-mail account; you're closing your *Microsoft* account and losing

access to all the *other* services associated with that account. Do you use Skype? OneDrive? XBox? If you login to those using the same e-mail address, they're the same account, and they'll be closed as well.

There's no way to close just part of the account.

This can be particularly painful if you close the Microsoft account you use to log in to your Windows computer.

The Microsoft Push

Particularly with Windows 10, Microsoft has been pushing hard for people to use their Microsoft accounts to log in to their machines. In fact, some Windows 10 features aren't available without one.

From Microsoft's point of view, it makes a lot of sense, both business and technical.

From the business side, it allows them to establish a longer

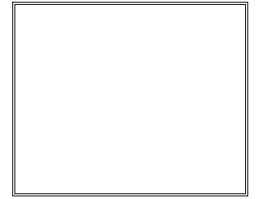
term relationship with you than just installing Windows – it makes it easier for you to use other Microsoft services in the future.

From the technical side, it actually solves an interesting problem: if you can't log in to your Windows machine because you forgot your Microsoft account password, you can simply use any or all of the online infrastructure to reset that password. Go to Outlook.com, for example, and change your password or recover your account. Once complete, that same password gets you back into your Windows machine (if you're using a Microsoft account to log in).

Regardless of how you feel about it, Microsoft is pushing hard to get everyone using a Microsoft product of any sort to have a Microsoft account.

The good news is, you likely already have one. ☺

P*PCompAS Newsletter
Greg Lenihan, Editor
4905 Ramblewood Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80920
e-mail: glenihan@comcast.net



Coming Events:

Next Membership Meeting: 3 December beginning at 9 am (see directions below)

Next Breakfast Meeting: 17 December @ 8 am, Country Buffet, 801 N. Academy Blvd.

Newsletter Deadline: 24 December

Check out our Web page at: <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>

