

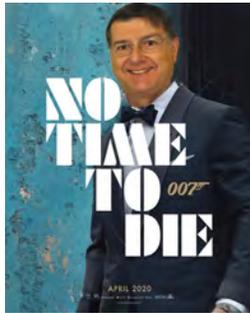
Bits of Bytes

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

Volume XL

May 2020

Issue 5



The Prez Sez

by John Pearce,
President,
P*PCompAS

It was really great to talk with everyone via Zoom on April 4th and again on the 18th. I didn't realize how much I missed all the chatter.

The general meeting on May 2nd will be via Zoom. It will start at 9 AM. It may be desirable to have everyone mute their microphone and press the Space Bar to unmute when they want to speak.

I have an agenda for the business meeting. The only item on the agenda that requires a vote is approval of the March minutes. The vote will be by a show of hands rather than by voice.

My crystal ball is still cloudy so I don't know when we will resume meetings at the church. It may not be until the social distancing recommendation is dropped. Members will need to feel comfortable with having a physical meeting before we return to doing that. I tried mentally picturing how to arrange the meeting room with 25 chairs spaced 6 feet apart and no tables to sit at.

I don't know if Cary Quinn is preparing a presentation for May. If not, then after the Around the Room portion we will talk about whatever topics are of interest to members like who has received their Economic Impact Payment.

Take care of yourself. The curve may be flattening but the virus is still infecting people. ☺

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 2 May 2020 (via Zoom)

A presentation topic has not been announced.

Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan,
for the P*PompAS Secretary

There was an unofficial meeting held on 4 April 2020 by President John Pearce, where we got a chance to try Zoom conferencing for the first time as a club. A little over 20 members participated. Another Zoom meeting with a dozen participants was held during our monthly Saturday breakfast time slot. ☺



Check Out Your Local Library Resources

While you are observing "stay at home" or "safer at home," remember that the library (ppld.org) has many virtual activities and classes available, even though they are physically closed. In addition to checking out books and movies, you can take yoga classes, create crafts, participate in book clubs, and get your kids and grandkids involved in creative activities. Call them at (719) 389-8968 if you have any questions. ☺

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Officers

President: John Pearce
jlpnet@comcast.net

Vice President: Cary Quinn
cary.quinn@gmail.com

Secretary: Phyllis Butler
phylbutler@aol.com

Treasurer: Chuck Harris
charris7525@gmail.com

Staff

APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini

Barista: David George
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Self-Isolating

By Toni Logan, P*PCompAS



“We need to reboot the year 2020. I believe it has developed a virus.” It would be nice if we could do that.

Since we have been doing the “stay at home,” Bob and I have used our electronic equipment to the max. Bob is on his iPad more than usual. His non-computer activity is working jigsaw puzzles. I have been going through my digital photos and videos, choosing the good ones, and then making a short video representation of each year, starting with the 1950’s. I am up to 2007 and it is a lot of fun.

I also thought that I could use my laptop in the living room to work on my desktop downstairs, using Team Viewer. It worked fine, but the thumbnails were so small, I could hardly see them. I couldn’t really work on them. I then decided to bring my desktop upstairs (it is an all-in-one) and when I turned it on, I had no Wi-Fi. Fortunately, I had an Ethernet cable in the living room, so I was able to get the Internet.

I mentioned this to my older son, Jim and he suggested that I disconnect the cable and check the settings. Lo and behold as soon as I disconnected the cable, I had Wi-Fi. Ah, the mysteries of the computer world.

We have also been shopping online for our groceries and picking them up at the store. This has been an adventure, because we never know what they will be out of. I do know that there are a lot of things that we wouldn’t be able to do without computers and the Internet.

We can do our banking, shopping, connecting with family and friends, our entertainment, and much more I am sure. Thank you to the pioneers of the Internet. ☺

Tip: Rewind or Fast Forward 10 Seconds

With YouTube and other video apps, you can move around quicker. In the YouTube app, double-tap anywhere on the left half of a video while it’s playing to rewind, or double-tap anywhere on the right half of the picture to skip ahead. Each time you double-tap, YouTube will seek 10 seconds ahead or back.

Keep tapping to go farther back or ahead. For example, if you tap the left half of the video three times, YouTube will go back 20 seconds. If you tap the right half of the video four times, YouTube will jump ahead 30 seconds. YouTube will show you how many seconds it’s fast-forwarding or rewinding on the screen.

The Seek bar at the bottom of a video is still a useful way to scroll through a long video. But, once you’ve skipped to about the right place, you can perform a few taps to quickly make adjustments. ☺

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Wi-Fi 6 Is Here: Should You Upgrade to Wi-Fi 6 in 2020?

By Chris Hoffman, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.howtogeek.com/525698/wi-fi-6-is-here-should-you-upgrade-to-wi-fi-6-in-2020/>



Wi-Fi 6 hardware is here. You can buy routers, smartphones, and laptops that support the latest generation of Wi-Fi today. At [CES 2020](#), we saw many more Wi-Fi 6 devices announced. You might actually get some Wi-Fi 6 hardware this year—but is it worth the upgrade?

What Is Wi-Fi 6, and Why Should You Care?

[Wi-Fi 6 is the latest generation of the Wi-Fi standard](#). The Wi-Fi Alliance retroactively renamed older standards, so [802.11ac is Wi-Fi 5](#) and [802.11n is Wi-Fi 4](#). Wi-Fi 6 is also known as 802.11ax, but version numbers make things much simpler. It's easy to understand which versions of Wi-Fi are faster and newer.

When using a router with just a single device, Wi-Fi 6 could offer up to 40% faster data transfer speeds. But Wi-Fi 6 should really shine in crowded areas where the airwaves are congested. Intel [claims](#) Wi-Fi 6 will improve each user's average speed by "at least four times" in such areas. Whether it's the public Wi-Fi in a busy café or your own home Wi-Fi in a dense apartment building, Wi-Fi 6 could improve speeds.

RELATED: [Wi-Fi 6: What's Different, and Why it Matters](#)

A New Router Only Helps If You Have Wi-Fi 6 Devices



TP-Link's AX6000 router supports Wi-Fi 6.

Newer, faster Wi-Fi is always great. As usual, Wi-Fi 6 devices are backward compatible with previous generations of Wi-Fi. You can get a phone with Wi-Fi 6 and connect it to your Wi-Fi 5 or Wi-Fi 4 router. You can get a router with Wi-Fi 6 and connect your older Wi-Fi devices to it, too.

But, as always, it's important to realize that you need Wi-Fi 6 on both an access point (router) and client device to benefit. If only one of the two supports Wi-Fi 6, they'll communicate using an older version of Wi-Fi they both speak.

Of course, not all devices on the network need to support Wi-Fi 6. For example, if you connect a phone that supports Wi-Fi 6 to a router that supports Wi-Fi 6 but you also have a bunch of older Wi-Fi 5 client devices connected, the phone and router will communicate via Wi-Fi 6 and the router will communicate with the other devices using Wi-Fi 5. Your router can do both at once.

When we talk about upgrading to a new generation of Wi-Fi, it's important to realize just what that means. Sure, you could upgrade your router and get Wi-Fi 6—but do you even have any client devices with Wi-Fi 6 built-in yet? You probably don't want to run out and buy a new smartphone or laptop with Wi-Fi 6 just for that reason—this new Wi-Fi isn't that big an upgrade! There aren't that many Wi-Fi 6-enabled client devices on the market just yet, either.

You'll probably gradually pick up Wi-Fi 6-enabled client devices as you buy new phones, laptops, tablets, and other devices. Wi-Fi 6 will become standard, just as Wi-Fi 5 ([802.11ac](#)) is today. Then, upgrading your router to take advantage of Wi-Fi 6 will be more tempting.

Routers With Wi-Fi 6 Are Available

Some routers with Wi-Fi 6 are already on the market. Do a search for "[Wi-Fi 6 router](#)" on an online electronics store and you'll see a handful of high-end models from manufacturers like [TP-Link](#), [NETGEAR](#), and [Asus](#).

You have fewer options than when buying an 802.11ac (Wi-Fi 5) router, however. Wi-Fi 6 routers are also significantly more expensive. Upgrading to a Wi-Fi 6 router from a solid Wi-Fi 5 router doesn't make a ton of sense right now, particularly when you probably don't have any Wi-Fi 6 devices.

At the start of 2020, Wi-Fi 6 hardware is very much an early adopter product. On the other hand, if

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Wi-Fi 6 (Cont. from page 3)

you do need to buy a new router anyway, consider picking up a Wi-Fi 6 model to future-proof your setup—assuming you can find one at a good price point.

At CES 2020, many router manufacturers announced new Wi-Fi 6 routers coming later in 2020. You'll have more options later this year, and they should be at more reasonable price points, too.

What Devices Support Wi-Fi 6?**All Apple's iPhone 11 models support Wi-Fi 6.**

Most devices on the market still don't support Wi-Fi 6. Smartphones, laptops, tablets, and other devices with Wi-Fi 6 support are all still fairly rare.

Apple's iPhone 11, iPhone 11 Pro, and iPhone 11 Pro Max all support Wi-Fi 6. However, older iPhones do not include Wi-Fi 6. Apple doesn't offer Wi-Fi 6 on any of its iPads or Macs yet, either.

Few Android phones support Wi-Fi 6, but a few do. Samsung's Galaxy Note 10 series, Galaxy S10 series, and Galaxy Fold support Wi-Fi 6. That's about it, for now.

Most laptops don't support Wi-Fi 6, either. Dell [released](#) an XPS 13 laptop with Killer Wi-Fi 6 hardware near the end of 2019, and HP released a Spectre x360 13 system with an Intel Wi-Fi 6 chipset. Intel's 10th generation architecture (Ice Lake) will have integrated support for Wi-Fi 6, which means it's about to become more common.

Other devices don't support Wi-Fi 6 either. We aren't aware of a single game console or TV streaming box with Wi-Fi 6 support. Your PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo Switch, Roku, Apple TV, and whatever else you have hooked up can't use this new standard. We haven't seen a smart TV or smart home gadget with Wi-Fi 6, either.

While Wi-Fi 6 may technically be here, it's still early days for this new standard and few devices support it. Even if you wanted to upgrade everything in your house to work with Wi-Fi 6, you couldn't.

Is Upgrading to Wi-Fi 6 Worth It?**HP's latest Spectre x360 laptop supports Wi-Fi 6.**

Is Wi-Fi 6 good? Of course! It's a newer, faster version of Wi-Fi that will eventually become standard in all the devices you buy, just like Wi-Fi 5 (802.11ac) and Wi-Fi 4 (802.11n) did. Technology marches on and Wi-Fi gets better and faster. That's great.

But is it worth upgrading to Wi-Fi 6 today? Not necessarily. If you're looking to get a new router anyway, you might check out models with Wi-Fi 6 and consider how they compare to Wi-Fi 5 routers at your desired price point. That's a good way to future-proof your setup, but we don't recommend rushing out to get a Wi-Fi 6 router if you're happy with your current router.

On the other hand, if you have an iPhone 11, a high-end modern Samsung phone, or one of the handful of laptops with Wi-Fi 6 and you really want to take advantage of the potentially faster speeds, you might get a new router with Wi-Fi 6. If you're the early adopter type, go ahead! Wi-Fi 6 hardware is out there and you can get it. (Don't be surprised if you don't see huge speed increases, however—Wi-Fi 6's big improvements are in battling congestion.)

Everyone else should wait. Wi-Fi 6 is good—but, in a few years, nearly everything you buy should have it. Wi-Fi 6 routers should come down in price and get better over the next few years, too.

What About Wi-Fi 6E?

Complicating matters further, [Wi-Fi 6E is also on the way](#)—pending changes in government regulations. There's no release date, but Wi-Fi 6E will extend Wi-Fi 6 into the 6 GHz frequency band, adding to the 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz bands Wi-Fi already uses.

This should further reduce congestion, but

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[SPEED TIP] Are Autoruns Slowing Down Your PC?

By Bob Rankin, <http://askbobrankin.com>, published through the APCUG

When you start up your Windows computer, there are a bunch of programs that automatically run, before the familiar desktop appears. Most of them are essential; some are dispensable; and others may be malicious. Learn how to tweak your autoruns to improve performance and security...

Ready to Tune Up Your Startup?

There are many software tools designed to keep your Windows system tuned-up and running as efficiently as possible; see my article, [Seven Free PC Maintenance Tools](#). Some utilities, like Advanced System Care, are designed for one-click simplicity. Today, I want to discuss a powerful maintenance tool that requires a bit more effort from its user.

[Autoruns for Windows](#) provides information that can reduce Windows launch time, free up memory and other system resources, or help you track down especially stealthy malware. It shows you all programs that automatically run when your PC boots up or a user logs in, and what extensions load into various Windows processes such as Internet Explorer and Windows Explorer. It works on Windows XP and higher, including 64-bit versions. This free software was created by Mark Russinovich, who currently serves as Chief Technical Officer of Microsoft's Azure product.

The Windows System Configuration Utility (msconfig.exe)

lets you view and disable a number of startup files and services, but it omits a lot of things that Autoruns catches: toolbars, browser helper objects, Windows Explorer shell extensions, to name a few. These items can be hiding places for malware or they may simply be long-forgotten, unnecessary burdens on your system.

To get started, download the Autoruns.zip archive and extract its contents to a folder of your choice. Then just double-click the Autoruns.exe (or Autoruns64.exe) file to start the program; there is no installation required.

Autoruns displays the name and location of each auto-running item. Double-clicking an entry takes you to its directory or opens its registry entry in the Registry Editor. Unchecking an entry disables its automatic execution. The Del key deletes an item from your system. For registry entries, it shows the exact registry key. For files, it shows the directory path and file name.

Left-Click, Right-Click...

Right-clicking on an entry opens a drop-down menu with several options. "Search online" is one of the handiest drop-down options; it launches a Web search using your default browser and search engine, effectively asking "what is this thing?" The search results can help you decide whether the item should be left alone, deleted, or disabled.

"Check Virus Total" is a new option in version 13 of Autoruns. VirusTotal.com is a Web service

that scans files or URLs with a total of 57 anti-malware engines. When Autoruns checks Virus Total, you'll see a ratio such as "8/57" to the right of the item selected. That means 8 out of the 57 anti-malware engines flagged this item as malware. Double-click on the Virus Total ratio to see the full results on a VirusTotal.com Web page. Note that a VirusTotal score of 1 or 2 is probably a false positive, and not an indicator of a virus. On my computer, CCleaner and Google Chrome both got a score of 1, but there's no cause for concern there.

The Autoruns screen is a bit busy, possibly overwhelming at first glance. But there's a way to eliminate the items that do not require immediate attention. The **Options button on Autoruns' main menu** lets you hide or unhide groups of entries, reducing the number of items that you need to examine. Hiding all entries signed by Microsoft, for example, limits your view to third-party software. If you hide both Microsoft-signed and VirusTotal Clean entries, you can focus on items that are either unverified or potentially malware.

I recommend that you click **Scan Options** on the Options menu, then check the boxes labeled "Check VirusTotal" and "Submit Unknown Images," then restart Autoruns. It will then check all items against the VirusTotal database and display

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Wi-Fi 6 (Continued from page 4)

you'll need Wi-Fi 6E-enabled hardware to take advantage of it, too. You can't just connect a Wi-Fi 6 phone to a Wi-Fi 6E router to use the 6 GHz channels—you'll need a Wi-Fi 6E-enabled phone and a Wi-Fi 6E-enabled router. Technology marches on, and there's always something new on the horizon. By the time Wi-Fi 6E hardware is here, we'll all probably be talking about Wi-Fi 7. ☺

RELATED: [Wi-Fi 6E: What Is It, and How Is It Different From Wi-Fi 6?](#)

Cleanup for the New Year 2020

By Jim Cerny, The STUG Monitor, www.thestug.org, [jimcerny123 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:jimcerny123@gmail.com)

It's time to give your Windows computer a good look and clean out all the junk! I bet most people clean out their garage more often than their computer. Sure you can run apps that delete stuff and you should do that regularly. But to start the New Year I am talking about going over ALL your files on your C-drive and your e-mails as well. Deleting the files you no longer want or need will not just free up some space (does anyone really care about space anymore?) but will make your backups run much more quickly and you will be able to find things so much more easily. Trust me on this – make it your new year's resolution! So here are my tips on what to look at to delete those unwanted files.

1. BEFORE YOU START deleting files, why not back them up first? Use a small portable drive (a "thumb" drive that plugs into your USB port) and copy everything you want to it. You should do this monthly anyway.

2. USE WINDOWS EXPLORER and go through ALL your folders and look at all your files. You need only look into the folders you save files in – such as Documents, Downloads, Music, Pictures, and Videos. You can SORT the list of files in a folder by DATE, so you can look for those old files easily and delete them. You can delete multiple files at one time by left-clicking the first file you want to delete, then holding down the "Ctrl" (control) key while you click on other files. When you let up on the Ctrl key you will have selected multiple files. Or you can hold down the "Shift" key when left-clicking on the second file and all files in-between will be highlighted.

3. DO NOT DELETE A FOLDER without looking inside it and seeing everything in it. Deleting a folder will delete all files and other folders in it. Look before you delete.

4. DELETING FILES AND FOLDERS FROM YOUR C-DRIVE will put them in your Recycle Bin, so you need to delete them from there too. If you delete files from an auxiliary drive (such as a USB "thumb" drive) they will NOT go to your Recycle Bin.

5. PHOTOS – Go through all your photo files, every photo, and delete the ones you do not want. Each photo is a file. Get a small portable drive and put all your photos on it and then delete them from your C-drive. Copy them to another device for backup. Or, use "Google Photos" and put them all there – it's free and really nice.

6. BANKING – Review ALL your charge or debit cards and cancel those you no longer need or want. Review ALL AUTO-payments. Are you still auto-paying for a service you do not use? Lots of people do not stop their auto-payments when they need to.

7. CONTACT LIST – Review ALL contacts on your contact list. Do you have more than one contact list? Delete all those old contacts you no longer need. Cut the cord.

8. APPS and programs – delete those apps you no longer use.

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Autoruns (Cont. from page 5)

the results.

Images highlighted in red are "unverified," meaning no digital signature is attached that enables verification of the author's identity. That doesn't necessarily mean it's malicious, just that it requires that you check to see if it's something you definitely want or need.

Images highlighted in yellow are

missing a target file. You may want to delete such items (after doing a web search) so that Windows doesn't waste start-up time trying to launch programs that aren't there.

Autoruns is a powerful tool for deep troubleshooting. But don't use it casually or you may delete something that your system needs in order to function. If you fear a finger-fumble, create a System

Restore point before making any changes, and you'll be able to undo any mistakes. To create a restore point, click the Start button and type, "create a restore point" in the Search box. Click the "create a restore point" link in the search results and then click the "Create" button at the bottom of the System Protection tab that appears. ☺

What is TikTok, and Why Are Teens Obsessed with It?

By Matthew Hughes, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.howtogeek.com/536434/what-exactly-is-tiktok-and-why-are-teens-obsessed-with-it/>



TikTok: teens love it, and parents don't understand it. Congress fears it. Brands want to make money off it. It is, perhaps, the most controversial (and beloved) social network ever. Downloads of the app are rapidly outstripping those of more established social networks, like Twitter and Facebook. TikTok even aired [a commercial](#) during the 2020 Super Bowl.

So, what is TikTok, and how does it work? Why are lawmakers desperately scared of it? And—perhaps most importantly—why should you care?

A Short Introduction to TikTok

At its core, TikTok is a video sharing application, not dissimilar from Vine, which Twitter discontinued in 2016. People can post videos and use an array of soundtracks and Snapchat-style filters, which can morph faces or create other intriguing visual effects.

People can follow other accounts and create a feed of new content from the creators they enjoy most. There's also a "For You" feed that shows a random assortment of videos

from others. This mechanism offers an endless thread of new stuff to watch and feeds into the highly addictive nature of TikTok. However, it's also what makes TikTok such an enticing platform—it allows those with even the smallest followings to "go viral" and become online celebrities overnight.

Perhaps the biggest virtue of the "For You" feed is how it exposes someone to content from creators he or she otherwise wouldn't typically follow. It punctures the filter bubble. For example, in 10 minutes, you might see content from those whose political views diverge wildly from your own, or other communities you might not ordinarily engage with, like the military or law enforcement.

To exemplify this point, within five minutes, I switched from watching someone demonstrate a new cosplay outfit to a U.S. airman confidently hanging from the cargo ramp of a C-130 Hercules transport plane.

The serendipitous nature of fame on TikTok is also attracting people from other platforms. When I interviewed rapper Shevin McCullough (who performs as [Showtime Shevin](#)), he described the platform as "fertile grounds" compared to YouTube. While YouTube is far more established, it's harder for new creators to create a die-hard following on there.

Beyond that, TikTok has the standard features you'd expect from a social network, including direct messages and the ability to "like" videos.

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Cleanup (Cont. from page 6)

9. OLD CDs? -- Do you still have any old CDs? Copy them to a portable drive and throw them away. Yes, you can copy music and other files too.

10. REORGANIZE – Now that you have deleted a lot of files, review the folders you have remaining and reorganize what you are keeping. Delete old folders you no

longer want and create new and more meaningful folder names and move the files into them. You can change file and folder names using Windows Explorer.

11. BOOKMARKS – Review your bookmarks (web page shortcuts) and "tabs" on your web browsers and delete the ones you no longer use.

12. E-MAIL – Review all your saved e-mail folders and delete the ones

you no longer need. How many e-mails are in your Inbox? More than 50? You can set your e-mail option to automatically delete old e-mails for you.

Maybe this is a bit much to do in one session, so just pick one at a time. And give yourself a nice reward for doing it! Your computer will thank you and you will be thankful yourself the next time you think "Where did I put that file?!" ☺

TikTok Is for the Memers

Of course, we've only skimmed the surface of what makes TikTok special. When compared to pretty much any other social network, TikTok's more optimized to create [memes](#). People can repurpose audio footage from other videos and create a unique take on someone else's idea.

What does that look like? Here's a four-minute supercut of people making their own lip-synch videos to a brief snippet from The Living Tombstone's *No Mercy*, about the perils of choosing a character in the popular multiplayer FPS, "Overwatch."

There are also duets, which are precisely what they sound like. A person superimposes themselves next to someone else's video and effectively creates a brand-new piece of content. If you're curious what that's like, here's a short clip of people duetting a clip of someone lip-synching to Charlie Pugh's song, *Betty Boop*.

RELATED: [What Is a Meme \(and How Did They Originate\)?](#)

How TikTokers Make Money

Unlike YouTube, monetization of content is still relatively underdeveloped on TikTok. For example, presently, there isn't an option for creators to make money from rolling ads on their videos. This remains the biggest hurdle for TikTok when it comes to attracting big-name talent from other social networks.

One way creators can make money is via livestreams, during which they receive "tips" from viewers who have virtual gifts. This mechanism is somewhat convoluted. Basically, people on TikTok can exchange real-world currency for TikTok coins to top up their virtual "wallet." They can use these virtual coins to tip creators with virtual gifts. Once received, these gifts are converted into a further virtual currency called Diamonds, which creators can withdraw in real-world cash. The exchange rate varies and is subject to change by TikTok itself.

There's also influencer marketing. It's not uncommon for brands—particularly those in the fashion and lifestyle spaces—to collaborate with popular creators and send them swag or cash in exchange for mentions. While livestreams are open to everyone on TikTok, only the biggest names will be solicited for an influencer marketing deal.

Why TikTok Is So Controversial

TikTok is owned by a Chinese company called ByteDance. It's the result of an amalgamation between two existing apps: [musical.ly](#) and [douyin](#). TikTok is unusual because it's the only internationally-successful Chinese social network, with an appeal that extends far into the Western world.

This has caused some consternation within the halls of Congress, with many lawmakers dubbing it a "[national security threat](#)" and seeking testimony from TikTok's leadership team. In the U.S. Senate, a bipartisan front has arisen against TikTok, with senators Chuck Schumer and Tom Cotton [calling for an intelligence probe](#) into the app.

After all, the Beijing-based social network not only has access to the information of Americans who use the platform, but it could also censor the content Americans see on the network. For example, lawmakers are concerned TikTok might censor videos on topics the Chinese government finds sensitive, like the Hong Kong democracy protests or the plight of the Uighur ethnoreligious minority.

For what it's worth, ByteDance rebuked the claims made by Congress. However, it did attract fire for removing a U.S. teenager's popular video about the Uighur situation. The company later claimed this was a "moderation error" and [unbanned the teen's account](#).

These concerns are not unreasonable. As it is, China has its "[Great Firewall](#)," which bans or censors most of the western internet from its users. And on top of that, the country's [government influenced the NBA's actions](#) over a single employee's personal Tweet and pressured U.S. companies like [Blizzard to suspend players](#) for opinions they didn't like.

What the Future Holds

TikTok is an intriguing video platform. It combines all the dopamine-triggering mechanisms that make for an addictive app. It's also uniquely optimized for creating memes from otherwise innocuous content. It can produce viral stars out of nowhere and is, in essence, a fame factory. These factors alone explain its rapid growth and enduring popularity among Generation Z.

As it grows, it will no doubt continue to attract the attention of those in the halls of power, as they try to come to terms with the existence of a Chinese social network just as successful as anything from Silicon Valley. ☺

Make a Windows 10 Recovery Drive, NOW

By Bob Rankin, <http://askbobrankin.com>, published through the APCUG

What is the best time to prepare for a disaster? When everything's going just fine, of course. Unfortunately, many people don't take the time to create a System Recovery Drive for their Windows 10 systems until AFTER they really need it. Here are the steps to make a bootable USB recovery drive; I hope you will follow them right now, if you have not done so already...

How to Create a Win 10 System Recovery Drive

What causes a corrupted installation of Windows? Malware, a software glitch, human error, or maybe cosmic rays. (See [Do Computers Get Tired?](#)) The point is to be prepared, in case it does happen. Let's walk through the process of creating a System Recovery Drive that will help you get back to good if things go bad.

There are several pathways to Windows 10. You might have upgraded from Windows 7 or 8. You might have done a "clean install" on a formatted hard drive. Or you might have purchased a new PC with Windows 10 pre-installed. I mention this as a preamble to creating a Windows 10 system recovery drive, because if you ever need to re-install, there's a chance you'll need to enter a product key to (re)activate Windows.

Your Windows Product Key is a 25-character text string that used to appear on a holographic sticker attached to your setup CD, or the PC's chassis. Windows 10 PCs don't come with that Certificate of Authenticity. Instead, the Product Key is (usually) embedded in the computer's BIOS. Every time you re-install Windows 10, the key is read from the BIOS and activation is automatic. But just in case, you should find your Product Key and store it in another, safe place.

FINDING YOUR PRODUCT KEY - Open PowerShell by entering "powershell" in the Start menu's search box and clicking on the app that appears in the search results. When you see a command line prompt - typically **PS C:\Users\username>** - copy and paste the command below onto the command line. (Copy it exactly, including all the parentheses and punctuation.)

```
(Get-WmiObject -query 'select * from SoftwareLicensingService').OA3xOriginalProductKey
```

When you see the 25-character key, highlight and copy it from Powershell to some safe storage place. I simply e-mailed mine to myself with the subject line, "Windows 10 Product Key." If I ever need it, a quick search of my e-mail will find it.

CREATING A RECOVERY DRIVE

Booting from a recovery USB drive allows you to perform basic troubleshooting and repairs, and to use Windows' automatic troubleshooter utility. If you include the Windows 10 system files on your recovery drive, you can boot from that drive and re-install Windows 10 if necessary.

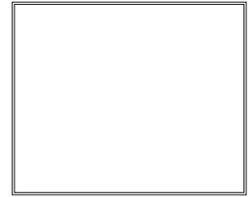
A basic recovery drive needs only 512 MB of space, but if you plan to copy the system files to the recovery drive it should have at least 16 GB of total space. The USB drive will be formatted during creation of the recovery drive, so move any data you wish to preserve.

Enter "Create a recovery drive" in the Search box to find the shortcut that leads to the recovery media creator tool. When the tool starts, the option "Back up system files to the recovery drive" will be checked. Uncheck it if you want just a basic recovery drive. Then insert a USB drive in a port and click Next in the tool's window. Follow the prompts and soon you will have a recovery drive. Label the flash drive and keep it in a safe place.

If you don't have an OEM (vendor-supplied) recovery partition, you can add Windows 10 installation files to the recovery drive by downloading the Windows 10 Media Creation tool, using it to create an ISO file, double-clicking to mount the ISO file in Explorer, and then dragging the complete contents of the mounted drive to your recovery drive.

You won't miss your recovery drive until it's desperately needed, and then it will be too late. So take the time to make one while you don't need it. If your Windows 10 system somehow gets borked, insert your recovery drive, reboot your computer, and follow the prompts to recover. ☺

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



Coming Events:

Next Membership Meeting: 2 May @ 9 am, via Zoom

Next Breakfast Meeting: TBD

Newsletter Deadline: 23 May

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

