

Bits of Bytes

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

Volume XLII

August 2022

Issue 8



The Prez Sez

by Cary Quinn,
President,
P*PCompAS

The Colorado State Fair will be August 26–September 5, 2022. Having gone to the El Paso County Fair, I am looking forward to indications of how technology and the positive use of social media has changed the landscape for agricultural education and the organization of this state-wide event.

At the August meeting, there will be a short presentation on the state of online scams, and some entertaining videos on how to fight back. ☺

Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan,
P*PCompAS Secretary

President Cary Quinn waited until 9:05 am to open the 2 July 2022 membership meeting. There were no guests. David George made the coffee and Cary Quinn brought patriotic doughnuts. A \$1 donation is requested from members for doughnuts and coffee.

OFFICER REPORTS

Cary reminded everyone that the office of vice-president is open. The plan was to have Rob Truman as a presenter today.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan announced the next newsletter deadline is 23 July. The call for articles will be a little early

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 6 August 2022

The topic will be Online Scams and Scambusting.

because the editor will be on a business trip at that time.

Treasurer Toni Logan stated our savings account grew by another 12 cents and currently is at \$2832.64. Checking stands at \$44.74, for a total of \$2877.38. Toni reported the audit performed by Cary Quinn and John Pearce last month was successful. At the meeting, Toni gave Joe Nuvolini a \$10 check for a Colorado registration fee.

Membership Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

Librarian Paul Godfrey had nothing to report.

APCUG Rep/Webmaster Joe Nuvolini said the newsletter was posted within minutes of receiving it.

Ann Titus had nothing to report concerning the Board of Directors.

OLD BUSINESS

Cary Quinn said he is still looking into a microphone solution for our meetings.

Joe Nuvolini will try contacting the church to see if we should break down the tables after our meeting or leave them up.

NEW BUSINESS

There was a motion to file the Treasurer's Report for audit and it passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next social breakfast meeting will be Saturday, 16 July, at Perkins, starting at 8:00 am. It's the same weekend as the County Fair.

Our next membership meeting is Saturday, 6 August.

AROUND THE ROOM

John Pearce asked if anyone knew of an inexpensive way to add bookmarks to a PDF file. Looking at the Adobe website, they recommend their Acrobat product or their PDF editor. No one knew of one.

Toni Logan wanted to watch major league baseball on her Kindle Fire. Amazon told her to get a new 7-inch Fire (came out in June), which she did, and MLB is not supported. Toni also had an issue with using an external USB drive to transfer photos to her computer and the USB connection disappeared. Unplugging it and rebooting fixed the problem.

John Linder saw the movie "2000 Mules," and was amazed how people could be tracked by their cellphone data.

Joe Nuvolini was listening to "The Whistler" on *Old Time Radio* and someone said "You spend over \$100 a year on gasoline." Ah, the good old days.

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Officers

President: Cary Quinn
cary.quinn@gmail.com

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Greg Lenihan
glenihan@comcast.net

Treasurer: Antoinette Logan
antoinettelogan@gmail.com

Staff

APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini

Barista: David George
Drawings: Cary Quinn
Editor: Greg Lenihan
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John Pearce



President Cary Quinn at the July membership meeting.



Meeting attendees in person at the July meeting.



Digerati at the July breakfast. (Picture by Cary)

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How to Update Drivers on Windows 10

by Mahesh Makvana, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.howtogeek.com/812781/how-to-update-drivers-on-windows-10/>

Windows 10 updates most of your device drivers automatically. But if you'd like to manually install the latest drivers (say for your graphics card), you can do so by downloading the drivers from the device manufacturer's site or using Device Manager. We'll show you how.

When Should You Manually Update Your Device Drivers?

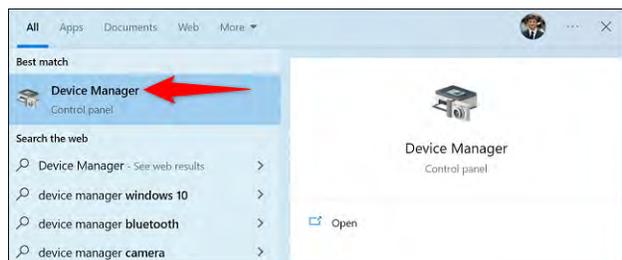
Windows 10's update system [installs the latest drivers](#) for most of your hardware components automatically, saving you time and effort. However, it may not install drivers for specific devices.

If you want to install drivers for those specific devices, or you want to use certain drivers that are only available on your device manufacturer's website, you can manually install them on your PC, as we'll explain in this guide.

Automatically Update Device Drivers With Device Manager

With Windows 10's Device Manager utility, you can let your PC automatically find and install the latest drivers for your devices, or you can pick the already-downloaded drivers on your storage and install them.

To use this method, first launch the "Start" menu and search for "Device Manager." Then click the app in the search results.



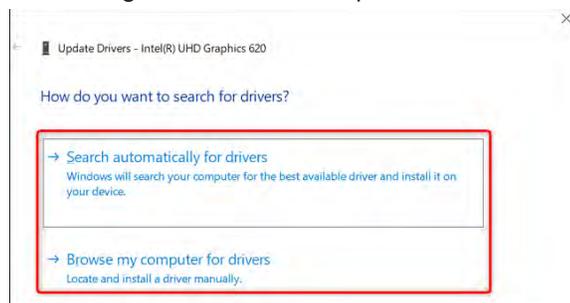
In Device Manager, find your device's category and click the right-arrow icon beside it. Then right-click your actual device and choose "Update Driver."



An "Update Drivers" window will launch. Here, if you want to let Windows automatically find and install the latest drivers for you, select "Search Automatically for Drivers."

If you've already downloaded the drivers to your PC, then install those by selecting "Browse My Computer for Drivers" and choosing your drivers.

We'll go with the former option.



If Device Manager finds new drivers for your device, it'll download and install them for you. You'll then have to [restart your Windows 10 PC](#).

If newer drivers are not available, Device Manager will say that the best drivers for your

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Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 1)

Warren Hill cannot adjust the volume on his desktop with the sound icon. Joe Nuvolini and John Pearce both fixed this problem but could not remember the exact procedure. Joe has the instructions at home and said he would send

them to Warren. John believed it had to do with Device Manager.

PRESENTATION

Our speaker did not show, so we watched some Tech for Seniors videos. One was a highlight of live TV streaming services. Another

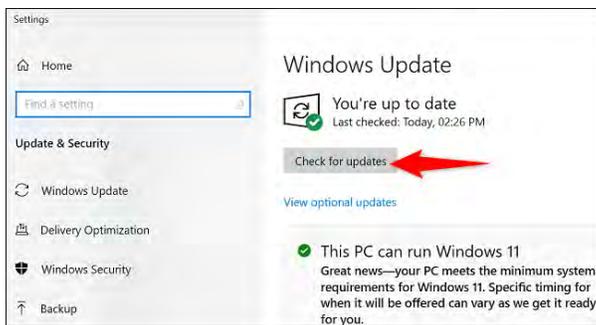
was Ron Brown on an E-bike in Canada, listening to Ray Baxter's music playlist. Hewie Poplock had a segment on Facebook setting tips. The last video was an old one from the BBC called "the Joy of Email" when e-mail was just becoming a thing. ☺

Update Drivers (Continued from page 3)

device are already installed. In this case, you can still force your PC to check for the latest drivers via system updates by clicking “Search for Updated Drivers on Windows Update.”



If you chose the Windows Update option, you’re now in the Settings app, where you can check for the latest software updates that include newer drivers.



And that’s how you let Windows support you in finding and installing the latest device drivers on your PC. Very useful!

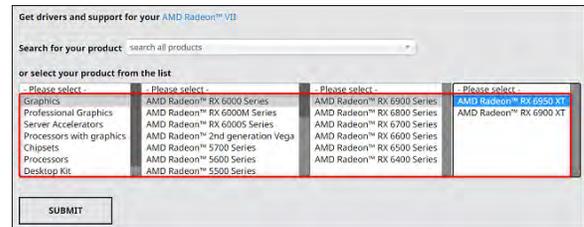
Manually Download and Install the Latest Device Drivers

Most device manufacturers offer driver downloads on their websites. This way, you don’t have to use Windows Update or Device Manager to find and install the latest drivers.

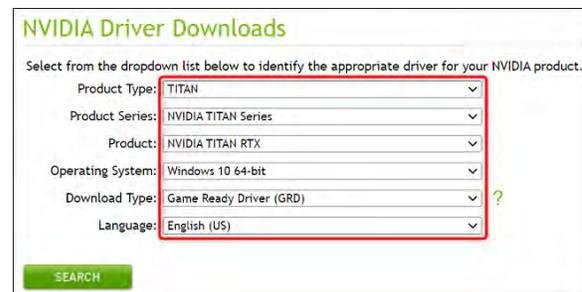
You should use this method if you want to install specific [drivers that are only available on the manufacturer’s website](#), or if you can’t find the latest drivers for your device using the above methods.

Manufacturers like AMD, NVIDIA, and others have dedicated driver download pages on their websites. You simply go there, specify your device, and the site lets you download the correct drivers for your machine.

For example, to download drivers for AMD devices, head to [AMD’s support page](#). There, select your specific product, and the site will offer drivers for various operating systems.



Similarly, [to download NVIDIA drivers](#), head to the [NVIDIA download site](#). There, choose your device from the list and you can download the appropriate drivers for your PC.



When your driver file is downloaded, run it to begin installing the drivers. When you’re done, [give your PC a reboot](#) and your drivers will become active.

And that’s how you ensure you’re always using the most up-to-date device drivers on your Windows 10 PC. Enjoy! 😊

Tip: Windows 10 Search
No longer just meant to help you find a misplaced file, the search feature is integrated into systems menus as well.
Click the search icon at the bottom left of your screen to get started. By default, the search window shows the top apps you use, as well as recent activities, so you can easily click on the programs and files you use most.
Simply start typing in the taskbar at the bottom of the search window, and Windows will get you what you need.
If you want to quickly narrow down the search by category, choose one of the 3 icons that appear on the top left of the window, as seen below.
From left to right, you can guide Windows to only search in Apps, Documents or the Web.

Avoid These 10 Dangerous Mistakes When Using Power Strips

by Joshua Powers at Komando.com (tip from 06/29/22)

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You need to charge your phone, and that lamp you're trying to plug in is just too far away from the outlet. So you reach for a power strip to save the day.

But did you know there is a surprisingly long list of ways people [misuse power strips](#)? These mistakes lead to electrical shorting, fire hazards and destruction of appliances.

Keep reading for a list of mistakes to avoid when using power strips to prevent a whole mess of problems.

1. Don't plug one power strip into another

This leads to power strip overload. Overloading a power strip often results in short-circuiting, but it can go further. Overloading a power strip can lead to the entire plastic housing melting and causing a fire. It's never a good idea to "daisy chain" power strips.

Be careful when you plug anything into your power strip by checking the amperage requirements. Inexpensive outlets from dollar stores will have very low amperage thresholds and often won't be UL tested.

Look for UL testing or certification. This ensures the wiring can withstand the advertised amperage. If it isn't UL tested, it's not worth bringing into your home.

2. Avoid plugging beauty tools into a power strip

Beauty tools such as curling irons and hair dryers turn electricity into heat. That's okay in a standard wall outlet, but a power strip isn't designed for that much electrical pull.

Because it's turning all that electricity into heat, the prongs on your beauty tool plug will heat up as it draws additional power (which

may depend on your settings). That leads to overcharging and a high probability of fire.

This is another instance where you need to think about the amperage of your products. There's usually a maximum and minimum draw. If it even poses the potential to draw more amperage than your power strip can handle, it's a bad idea.

3. Don't assume that your power strip is safe near pets

Cats are curious and dogs can do silly things. Power strips are attractive to them (usually because of the light to signify that the current is live). But you shouldn't cover up power strips, as we'll explain later. You also shouldn't leave them out in the open for your pets to get to.

Power strips shouldn't be used as permanent solutions. Once you're done with your device(s), turn your power strip off and unplug it for the safety of your little furry ones.

4. Don't use indoor power strips on outside outlets

Outdoor power strips are designed to handle weather conditions such as moderate rain. Unless your power strip explicitly states that it's made to handle outdoor weather, it must stay inside.

Even outdoor power strips have their limitations. They should never be submerged or left in the elements for too long. Waterproof ratings differ depending on how sealed a product is, so even if you buy an outdoor power strip, there are still limitations due to the open outlets.

5. That visibly damaged power strip is not "fine to use" – it's trash

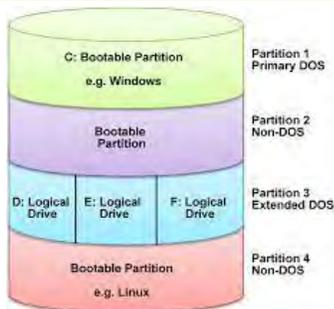
Sometimes a power strip will short and shut off your devices. If this happens even for a few seconds, you have to inspect the power strip for signs of damage.

Look for signs of singe around the outlets. These will appear as rust-colored marks that you might be able to wipe off with your fingers. The typical response for these marks on a house outlet is to call an electrician and not use the

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Hard Drive Partitioning Myths, Mistakes, and My Advice

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



Occasionally I get a reader question like this: “I just got a new computer with a big 2-terabyte hard drive and I’m wondering about hard drive partitioning strategies. A friend told me to create a very small C: partition for a swap file, put Windows

on the D: drive, and create several other partitions for different types of data. That sounds complicated, so is this a good idea?” Read on for my advice on hard drive partitioning...

Are Hard Drive Partitions a Smart Idea?

In general, I disagree with the idea of having multiple partitions on a hard drive. Unless you are running a dual-boot system, with one partition for Windows, and another for Linux or some other operating system, I recommend that you stick with one large partition. I know I’ll get some flack for this, but read on to see why I think that’s the best strategy for most users.

Continued on page 7

Power Strips (Cont. from page 5)

outlet until it’s fixed, so why would you use a power strip with the same problem?

6. Never plug this list of appliances into a power strip, no matter what

There are a lot of appliances you absolutely *should not* plug into a power strip. These include anything high-capacity such as a washer or dryer, refrigerator, sump pumps and even space heaters.

If it turns electricity into raw heat, it’s too powerful to plug into a power strip. Avoid plugging in freezers, microwaves and even coffee makers.

Lastly, avoid plugging slow cookers, hot plates, toasters and air compressors into power strips. Many of these devices require surge protectors or UL-rated extension cables designed for high-capacity output.

7. Don’t hide active power strips under rugs, carpets, or behind curtains

We talked about those marks you can get on power strips earlier. When that happens, sparks come

out of the outlet. Using a cardboard box, rug, carpet, or curtains to cover up an otherwise ugly-looking power strip drastically increases your fire hazard risk.

Even without sparks being a concern, power strips can heat up quickly. Insulating them with any fabric is dangerous.

8. Do not assume a power strip will protect any of your appliances or devices

Power strips do not protect your appliances. You should never plug anything into a power strip that you’re not comfortable losing.

Power strips often fail. They’re helpful and can be used safely, but you can’t stop a power surge on your own. If that happens, your connected appliances and gadgets can be destroyed. The damage adds up quickly.

9. Never put a power strip near anything that could even get remotely wet by accident

Avoid putting power strips near the kitchen sink or in the laundry room near the washing machine. You should never bring one into the bathroom for any reason.

We think about the utility and convenience of using power strips, which can make us forget just how dangerous they are when misused.

If there’s a chance that a power strip could get wet, you need to find an alternative solution. That solution is **not** to use an outdoor power strip inside, by the way.

10. Avoid leaving them plugging in when not in use

It’s good to turn the power switch off when you’re done with a power strip, but it doesn’t stop there. If it’s plugged into the wall, it’s drawing power and running through the wiring inside.

The switch acts as a disruptor to the outlets. It doesn’t prevent electricity from entering the power strip at the outlet level. Turn the switch off and unplug any power strip that isn’t in use.

Psst, a power strip and surge protector aren’t the same things

Power strips extend (most of) the utility of your wall outlet. Surge protectors actually protect your appliances, personal gadgets and electronics from extreme harm. ☺

Partitioning (Continued from page 6)

Years ago, some hard drive controllers, as well as older versions of the Windows and Mac operating systems, could not accommodate a hard drive partition larger than 2 GB. If you had a hard drive larger than 2 GB, you needed multiple partitions to make use of the full capacity of the drive. So a 10 GB drive required five 2 GB partitions, which would end up being the C:, D:, E:, F:, and G: drives on a Windows computer. But the hardware and software to support large hard drives have been around for almost 20 years now, and these gyrations are no longer necessary.

Modern versions of Windows, Mac OS, and Linux can handle partitions of almost any size, even the multi-terabyte drives that are available on the market now. A terabyte is 1000 gigabytes, and a gigabyte is 1000 megabytes. (My first hard drive was 10 megabytes.)

Partitioning Myth #1

Some people go hog-wild with partitioning, and advise people to create one partition for the operating system, another for the Windows swap file, and still other partitions for installed software, music and photos. The rationale is usually along the lines that if your Windows operating system gets hosed by viruses or spyware, then you can simply re-install Windows and your programs will be safe on another partition. But they're forgetting about the Windows Registry, which tells Windows where all the user-installed software resides on the hard drive. If the Registry gets whacked by a virus, or you re-install Windows, ALL of your software will have to be re-installed.

Another problem with the "operating system on C: and programs on D:" idea is that some programs don't even ASK where you want to install them. They just plopp themselves down on the C: drive. And if you blindly copy them to the D: drive, they may not work, due to Registry problems. And even if the installer does give you a choice, the C: drive is always the default. Novice or casual users will probably not remember to change the target drive to D: or E: and the result will be a mishmash of programs installed on multiple partitions.

Partitioning Myth #2

Some people think that having a separate partition for the swap file will help with

performance. But everything I've read indicates just the opposite. Your system performance will be optimized when the swap file is on the same partition as the operating system because that minimizes the movement of the drive head. And what if you make your Windows or swap file partitions too small? It's easy to underestimate how large the swap file might grow. And it's not so easy to tweak the size of a partition if you run out of space.

Partitioning Myth #3

Others claim that putting Windows on some drive other than C: will provide protection from malware or ransomware because hackers are stupid and always target the C: drive. Well, that's just not true. If you want to protect yourself from viruses, spyware, and other threats, practice safe computing habits and install some good anti-virus protection. Along those lines, I recommend that you read my article on [PC Matic and whitelisting](#).

One Partition to Rule Them All?

There are other reasons why I disagree with the multiple partitions school of thought. First of all, it makes using and maintaining your computer that much harder. You'll always have to remember where things are supposed to be stored. "Uhh, do I put Photos on the D: drive, and Music on the E: drive? Or is it Programs on the D: drive, Music on the E: drive, and Photos on the F: drive? Aaauuugggh!" With a single partition, you have a lot less hassle.

Also, tasks like [maintaining and optimizing your computer](#) and [backing up your files](#) become more of a chore. And again, if you "outgrow" a partition, it's not trivial to make it larger. Oh, and if you think backing up one partition into another partition on the same disk is a good idea, think again. If the drive fails because of a power surge, head crash or other mechanical defect, ALL of your partitions will be lost. Always backup on a separate drive or external media.

Modern operating systems are very smart when it comes to managing large amounts on data on a hard drive. They don't need multiple partitions to take full advantage of the hardware, organize your files, improve performance, or enhance your security. Give your system one big chunk of disk space, organize it with as many folders as you like, and let it do its thing!

☺

What Exactly is a Rescue/Recovery/Repair/Emergency Disc?

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

There is no “exactly” when it comes to these terms.

This is yet another case of technology using terms inconsistently with confusion as a result.

I’ll review the most common things you might find on discs by those names and which terms are most likely to apply.

In short: The terms *rescue*, *recover*, *repair*, and *emergency* media are used inconsistently in the industry. They can refer to backup restore media, media containing diagnostic and repair tools, media containing operating system installation files, and more. Rather than relying on the names, look at what the media provides and choose what you need based on that.

Disc?

First, let’s talk about [disc](#). It specifically means optical discs like CDs, DVDs, and the like. These were the go-to media for these types of things for many years. They’re still one of the more common ways that software is distributed if it’s distributed physically at all.

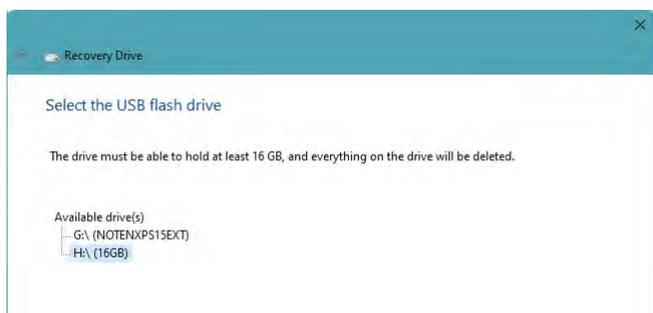
Many rescue/recovery/emergency “discs” are now really [USB](#) thumb drives. When you make these items on your computer, you may choose to write them to a thumb drive rather than burn a disc. You may not even have an optical disc drive anymore, making USB thumb drives the only option.

The thing that these two forms of media share is that a) you can write software to them, and b) you can boot your computer from them.

I’ll refer to them as “media” from here, but the discussion applies equally whether you’re using optical discs or USB thumb drives. Just to create more confusion, you may also see the generic term “drive” used for these media.

Recovery Drive

Windows lets you create what it calls a [recovery drive](#).



Quoting the information from the Windows process:

Even if your PC can’t start, you can use a recovery drive to reset it or troubleshoot problems. If you back up system files to this drive, you’ll also be able to use it to reinstall Windows.

This implies a few things about a Windows recovery drive.

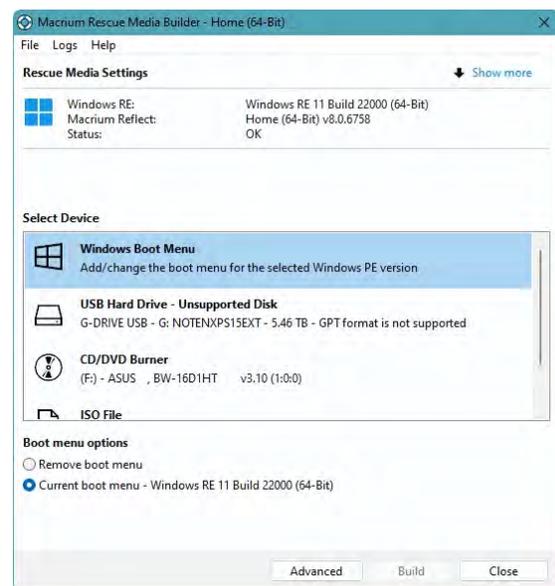
- You can boot from it.
- It contains Windows repair and diagnostic tools.
- Optionally, it can contain a complete copy of Windows to be used to reinstall completely.

Normally all those things can be done from within Windows, so the recovery drive is used only if you’re unable to boot your machine normally. Clearly, it needs to be made before you need it. It’s unclear if making it on another machine would work, but my belief is that as long as the Windows edition (Home/Pro/etc.) was the same, it should work.

Rescue media

Rescue media could refer to a recovery drive, as it’s something you use to “rescue” your unbootable machine.

Perhaps more commonly, “rescue media” is what’s created by [backup](#) tools like Macrium Reflect.



Continued on page 9

Rescue/Recover Disc (Continued from page 8)

Macrium also includes the Windows Boot Menu with a separate [partition](#) as “rescue media” — effectively turning your computer into a dual-boot system, with the rescue media as one of the options. More commonly you’ll use a CD/DVD or USB flash drive.

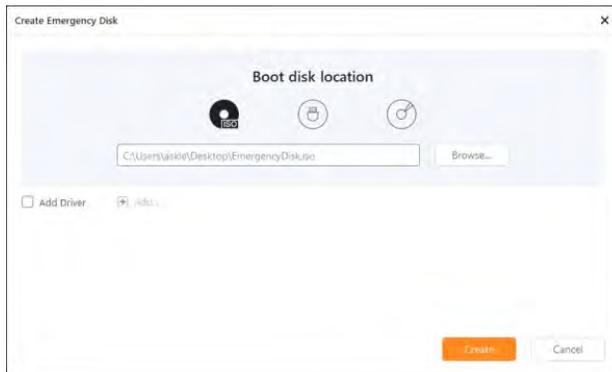
Rescue media:

- Is bootable, so you can use it if your system won’t boot normally.
- Contains a copy of the backup program used to create it.
- Allows you to restore a backup image to your system.
- Can often be used to back up your system even if you can’t boot the machine.

Note that there are normally no extra tools. This media is all about using your backup program to “rescue” your system. You would use this to restore your system from a backup image.

Other programs have other names for this. Other people may use the term “rescue disc” to mean something else.

Emergency Disc



This emergency disk:

- Is bootable, so you can use it if your system won’t boot normally.
- Contains a copy of the backup program used to create it.
- Allow you to restore a backup image to your system.
- Can often be used to back up your system even if you can’t boot the machine.

Once again, there are normally no extra tools. This is all about using your backup program in an emergency. You would use this when you need to restore your system from a backup image.

Other possibilities

The problem here is that any media you might be able to boot from in an emergency to rescue, recover, or repair your system could be called *emergency media*, *rescue media*, *recovery media*, *repair media*, or any number of other terms.

Examples include:

- The media available from your computer manufacturer with their hardware specific drivers and diagnostic tools.
- General-purpose media containing a variety of diagnostic tools. [UltimateBoot CD](#) is one example, but there are several others.
- Some security software vendors provide bootable media so you can run scans with their tools.
- “Live” media normally intended to evaluate and install a [Linux](#) distribution can also often be used for these purposes.

Even your [Windows Installation Media](#) qualifies, as it contains Windows’ own diagnostic and repair tools in addition to the operating system itself.

Do This

So, if you can’t be sure what the term means, how do you know what you have?

It’s not always easy.

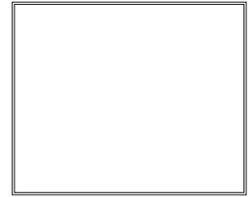
A better approach might be to ignore the name and look for a list of how it can be used. For example, if you need to reinstall Windows, look for media that says it can reinstall Windows, regardless of what it’s called. Similarly, if you need to restore an [image backup](#), then use the media from the backup software used to create the image in the first place.

If nothing else, consider making:

- A [Windows recovery drive](#), so as to have the operating system and its own diagnostic tools available.
- [Rescue/emergency/whatever media](#) from the backup software you use, so you’ll be ready to restore a backup image should you need to.

☺

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



Coming Events:

Next Membership Meeting: 6 August beginning at 9 am (see directions below)

Next Breakfast Meeting: 20 August @ 8:00 am, Perkins, 3295 E. Platte Ave.

Newsletter Deadline: 20 August

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

