



October in Tampa

A Monthly Publication of the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

Vol. 20 No. 10 October 2007

Meeting

**Ken Sparks of
Media Concepts, Inc.
Presents**

Digital Duplicating Services

Wednesday, October 10, 2007
6:30 PM
Art Pepin Hospitality Room
Pepin Distributing Co.
4121 N 50th St
Tampa, Florida

Meeting Preview: Ken Sparks from Media Concepts, Inc. will tell us about their digital duplicating services. As usual, the meeting will begin with our Windows SIG led by Bob LaFave.



Editor's Comments

By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
lamartin@tampabay.rr.com

Thanks to our contributors, Merle, Doug and Bob, there is a newsletter this month. I thought for a while that I was going to have to fill the newsletter with some of my rambling thoughts plus a looking-back article extracted from the October 1977 newsletter and perhaps some photos of old meetings. But, thanks to them, we have a newsletter of fresh material, and you don't have to see how much younger we all appeared 10 years ago.

Google seems to have some new news item every day or so. They have bought up some company for a few hundred million or maybe a billion. Or their stock price has increased to a

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November Meeting: Steve Singer from RDI will talk about the latest in computer hardware.

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Minutes of the September Meeting

By Doug Mullis, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group
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Before the meeting began, we watched a video of one of our members, Eddie Rodriguez, do his first tandem skydive at Zephyrhills, Florida. Eddie went with a group of students from USF and hired a cinematographer to record the event. We're not sure why Eddie jumped out of a perfectly good airplane, but he did live to show and tell us about it. Thanks for sharing your experience (and your dark side) with us, Eddie.

At 6:45 pm Bob LaFave brought us back to earth with our Windows SIG portion of our meeting by revisiting a program called PC Decrapifier for removing trial software that comes on new computers. It's free, but use at your own risk. You can download it at www.pcdecrapifier.com/download.

A member told us of a program for removing temporary files from your computer. Bob said this could also be done using Disk Cleanup. Getting rid of unused files will make virus scans quicker, as well as free up disk space.

A member asked how difficult it was to replace a wireless router. William LaMartin suggested trying it following instructions that come with the new router. The wiring is simple, and, if the encrypting is beyond you, just reinstall what you had and call for help. Bob warned that you want to encrypt to prevent unauthorized access to your system.

Another member had a problem with files on her hard drive being converted from Word 2003 format when she went from Office 2003 to Office 2007. William suggested opening each document and re-saving it in Word 2000 or 2003 format. Much dis-

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Member of
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First Time Vista – Part IV

By Merle Nicholson, Tampa PC Users Group
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I'm still occasionally using my Vista machine, but not for my regular business activities. I am getting used to it, including the User Access Control (UAC) pop-ups, which I have not disabled. I'd decided to install Microsoft One-Care on this machine and two other machines, so the following will be on two subjects: Microsoft One-Care and Vista File Manager.

One-Care. Microsoft One-Care is a subscription-based anti-virus, spyware, firewall and backup product. It costs \$50/year, but it allows three machines on the one subscription, which makes it pretty cheap. So I installed it on the Vista machine, on my peer-to-peer Win XP Pro server and on my Win XP Home notebook computer. You can install it on a trial basis, and it'll remind you when it's expired and also make it pretty easy to pay up.

My original thinking was that I wouldn't mind having an all-in-one product to simplify administration, and in that respect it works very well. There's a bubble in the system tray to click on, and all functions are accessible in a well-organized panel, including virus and other malware scanning, firewall and also file backup.

Firewall The firewall is two-way, a real improvement over the native XP/Vista one-way firewall. A one-way firewall is always looking at incoming internet traffic, hides your own computer from sight and blocks illegal intrusions from the outside.

A two-way firewall also looks at your own programs when they request internet services, checks against a list of permissions and then asks you in a pop-up if you want to allow some activity that is not authorized. I've used Webroot Desktop Firewall for three years on my business/personal computer, and it works in the same manner, and One-Care seems comparable. With Webroot, you can go into its database of programs and alter those settings, but it's something I rarely do.

Anti-Virus & Anti-SpyWare. What can I say about this? It scans reliably and when it's supposed to. It updates daily and notifies me that it has done so. It doesn't seem like it's a resource hog, but that's a pretty subjective thing. It even runs almost unnoticed on my notebook, a 1.8GHz Athlon single processor, and it's completely unnoticed on my Vista machine, which has a high-end AMD dual-core processor. I must say that both machines have more than adequate memory installed, which is usually a factor.

Now, on the XP machine, One-Care did once find a Trojan downloader virus that caused me some trouble. It was clear it did find the Trojan, but it failed to quarantine it. But – and this is important – it did not identify the file. In One-Care help, it said that the cause of failing to quarantine is based on the file being a system file that was loaded. So I did the pretty standard things. I disabled System Restore. That's because often System Restore will have a copy of the virus and it will return to you. Then I tried to run One-Care in Safe Mode, and it refused to run. So then I loaded and ran a single copy of AVG Anti-Virus, and Spybot Search & Destroy and maybe some others. And these others did not identify any virus.

So I went back to normal and went on with life, and daily, when it ran it found the same virus just like the first time. I looked for other sites that had tools that would remove that virus with no luck, so I submitted a report to Microsoft. And, I think, within two days I got a call from a person about it and also exchanged some email over the course of about four more days. One of the things he wanted to do was to remote control into my machine, and I must say that he accepted the fact that I was probably as capable as he to operate my computer.

To my surprise, he did finally tell me that there is a virus scanner that can be run in safe mode. Later I did find mention of it in the Microsoft Knowledge Base. In any case, it runs on the command line box and is strictly text-based, like an old DOS program. He said it took a long time to run, and he was right. After about four hours, it displayed the name of the offending file that contained the virus, and also said that it failed to quarantine the file! It was in a zip file

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that I'd archived to my file server and had erased from my personal computer. So I just deleted the file. In retrospect I should have "wiped" the file first before erasing, but I did not do that. It didn't go to the recycle bin though. After it was all over, I enabled System Restore. I do think it wasn't really a virus, but I didn't need the file anyway, and I had to stop One-Care from detecting it every day.

Back to the subject of Vista/One-Care. Perhaps you've been reading about this lately. The complaint is that Windows Update will reboot your computer after doing updates. This is causing a flurry among those who believe that it is they – not Microsoft – who should decide when the computer is to be rebooted. The claim of course is that they may lose some important work that hasn't been saved, especially if they are not sitting at the computer when all this happens.

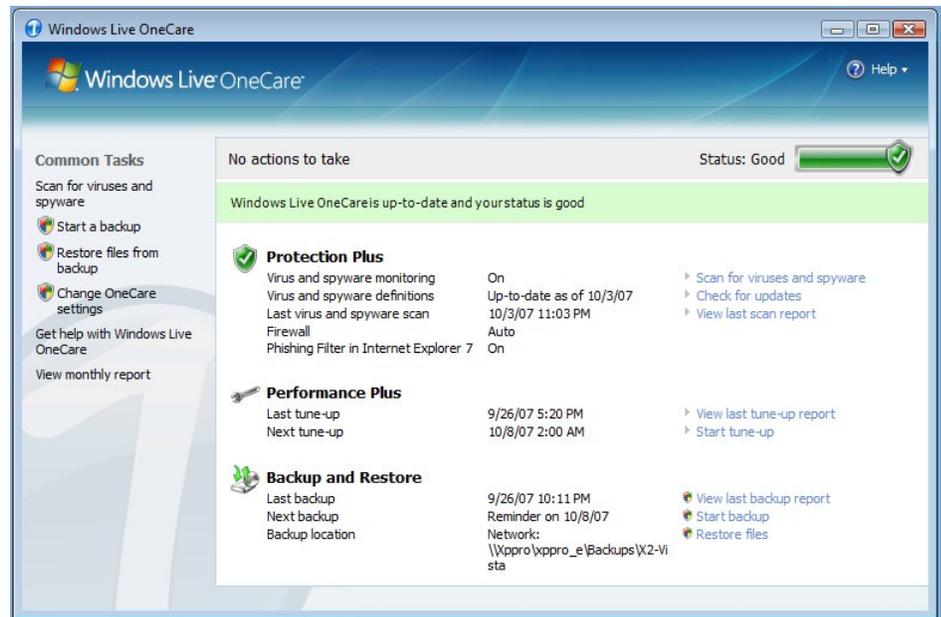
On most of my own computers, I've set the Update Options to download but not install automatically. Now add Windows One-Care on top of this in Vista. The problem is that One-Care has two status levels, "Good" and "At Risk". If it's "Good", there is a pop-up when the program updates and sometimes some other warm fuzzies. If you have a virus or have something that must be attended to, you're in the red zone and "At Risk". And then you're fairly frequently reminded that you must take some action.

But ... here's the problem ... if you have Windows Updates set to any of the options except "Automatically Update", ol' One-Care goes red on you. And you're reminded pretty frequently that you must do something about it.

Well jeez, give me a break. My own fear was that I'd get so used to the pop-ups that I'd miss something important. So I spent some research time to see if there was something I could do and ultimately submitted a problem ticket to Microsoft.

I got a pretty positive response that they could help, and the guy would phone me once a day, Saturdays and Sundays included; offered a registry edit fix that even I could tell changed the behavior of Windows Update (Not!); wanted to take remote control of my computer (Not!); and then ultimately admitted that it was a feature of One-Care and they couldn't change it. I really did waste a lot of time with a Microsoft person who took many days of back and forth only to realize that he didn't have a grasp on my problem. He would repeatedly ask questions that I had covered in my problem description.

I finally did change my Windows Update to Automatic for two reasons: 1) I thought it's more important to have One-Care show a red at-risk status only when it was important and 2) It's my Vista machine and I don't do my real business there.



Vista Windows Explorer: I've been using Windows Explorer in Vista quite a lot. I do a great deal of file work: moving, copying and organizing. I'll say now that Vista Windows Explorer makes handling files very difficult. It's a complete redesign and bears no resemblance to the XP version or any other version. It appears that the objective was to make casual searches easy, and they may have done a good job at that. But if you're a serious, professional computer user and have a lot of files to manage using even a simple file structure, you're going

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still more astronomical number. (It is at \$582 as I write this and was as high as \$595 a few days back.) Oh, if we had only had the foresight to have purchased a few shares when it first went public about three years ago at around \$85. Google now has a market capitalization of \$182 billion, as compared to Exxon with \$521 billion, Boeing, \$83 billion, GM, \$20.4 billion, GE, \$430 billion, and Hewlett-Packard, \$131 billion. Is Google really worth more than twice Boeing or more than Hewlett-Packard? I don't think so. They don't sell anything but search services (other companies use their search) and click advertising. How often do you click on a paid ad when you do a Google search?

As a computer club, we are not really interested in stock prices, but we are interested in keeping our personal information safe when we use our computers. That is why I cannot understand why many people I know use Google's Gmail. As I understand it, every Gmail message you send is scanned by Google so they can direct advertising to you, and all this information is saved in a database. I personally don't want anyone scanning my email.

What about web searches using Google? They know everything in which you have an interest--that is, they know everything that the person with, say, current IP address 22.156.184.104 is interested in. And then, if that is matched up with the person using Gmail whose messages come from IP address 22.156.184.104, well, they then know that Mary Smith writes letters to her congressman decrying the decline in morality of the country while at the same time she is searching the web for you know what. Think about it. ◆

Internet Picture of the Month



Soldiers of the 55th Armored Infantry Battalion and tank of the 22nd Tank Battalion move through smoke-filled street. Wernberg, Germany

With the Ken Burns WWII epic documentary on PBS TV recently, it is appropriate to use a WWII photo for our Picture of the Month. In looking for such images, I came across the sub-site of the National Archives that features a few select photos from all segments of the war. The URL is <http://archives.gov/research/ww2/photos/>

The pictures at this site are from the holdings of the Still Picture Branch (NNSP) of the National Archives and Records Administration.

October's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)
Scroogle (Search without a trail)
WWII Photos
Slate online magazine
The City Review - NYC
Pineapple Press (Florida Books)

<http://www.tpcug.org/>
<http://www.scroogle.org/>
<http://archives.gov/research/ww2/photos/>
<http://www.slate.com/>
<http://www.thecityreview.com/home.html>
<http://www.pineapplepress.com/>



Some of these links will join the many already on the Links page at our web site, where you need only click on the name.

FIOS World

By Robert Davis, Tampa PC Users Group
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Did you ever have one of those days when you got 150 emails waiting to download and you're logged on your landline at 37.2KB? Maybe none of you have that problem like I did. So, while spending a lot of time one day downloading email with a phone line, I decided it was time to change to the 21st century! I had tried to switch to DSL, but that is not available at my house. However, Verizon had recently installed their FIOS cable up to my house. I had to twist my own arm to spend extra money just for a quicker internet, but I did call Verizon. I'm getting close to the age where you only buy ripe bananas, and I was tired of spending so much time on downloading email.

Verizon set up a time to install FIOS for 10 am on Wednesday, September 19th. At about 9:50 am that day, the guy was there to install. They had said it would take about 4 hours. He was done in about 3 and a half hours. Very courteous and informative. I also had my old landline (that had zero enhancements and cost me over \$40 per month) put on FIOS for an additional \$25 per month. The FIOS phone service now includes caller ID, call waiting, voice mail, etc., as well as free long distance for USA and Canada any-time of day or night. The voice quality on the phone is at least as good as it was on the landline. When I added up the bills, I think I am paying less than \$20 more per month and I have a lot better phone and internet access. Life is good.

What a difference there is on the internet now! The installer's tests showed the download speed at about 10MB and upload at just under 2MB. Both ways are extremely faster than 32KB! A couple days ago I had 125 emails. With the old landline it would have taken me maybe an hour to download them all. With FIOS, it took about 30 seconds. Quite an improvement. So now I am hooked. Like the ads on TV claim, I will never go back to a landline, ever! The transition has been virtually seamless, so my hat's off to Verizon for a fine group of products. ◆

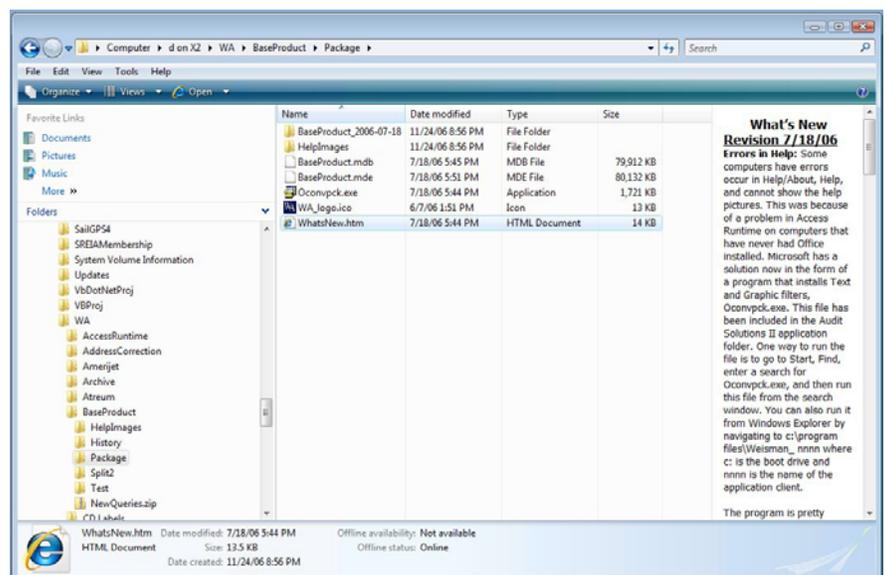
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to be unhappy.

My two largest complaints are that: 1) There is no way to show a complex directory tree structure that you can quickly absorb. Part of that is because the pale yellow folder icons are not distinct and the old + and - distinct boxes are no longer used. Instead, there is a tiny colorless triangle that denotes that there are folders below it. And 2) There is so much wasted space with three non-configurable toolbars and very little left for the tree and file details. You can, however, remove the only really useful menu bar. You can hide the details at the bottom; that does help, and you can remove the file viewer; all useful actions to take.

As a remedy, I have been looking for a Vista-compatible old-fashioned file manager. I'll pay money for it if I can find one. I have reviewed a couple of pretty good ones, but I reject even good ones if they stay resident after closing and if they have a huge amount of features that I have no interest in. I guess a lot of features aren't a really bad thing as long as you can turn them off or hide them. But I don't need to browse the internet with a file manager, I don't need to FTP, I don't need to publish to the internet, I don't need to sync between folders and I really don't need to view files.

It's too bad. I thought that the XP file manager was pretty good and would have been ideal if it had a file filter. There was a Windows 3.1 file manager called Norton Commander that had that feature, and it worked wonderfully. Maybe I'll get what I want eventually. If you find one, let me know, will you? ◆



Special Interest Groups

Microsoft Access SIG

This SIG meets the **first Tuesday** of the month at 6:30 PM. The meeting location varies. For information, contact William LaMartin at lamartin@tampabay.rr.com, or Merle Nicholson at merle@merlenicholson.com.

Digital Imaging SIG—Cancelled until further notice

Visual Basic for Applications SIG

This SIG meets the **third Wednesday** of the month at 6:30 PM. The meeting location varies. For information, contact William LaMartin at lamartin@tampabay.rr.com.

Windows SIG

This SIG occupies the first 30 minutes of our monthly, regular meeting and is devoted to a general Windows and computing discussion. Bob LaFave moderates the discussion.

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 cussion followed.

At 7:16 pm, President John Witmer took control of the meeting to conduct group business. He announced that the Fall Conference of FACUG would be a one-day event in Orlando on October 6th. Go to their website for full details. John also asked members to add their names to a list being circulated if they want a TPCUG membership card.

Next month's speaker will be Ken Scott from Media Concepts Inc. of Gulfport. They provide a service converting whatever imaging you have to CD's or DVD. Jim Purcell's daughter had them transfer videotape to DVD, and she was very impressed with their service and product quality. In November, we will have Steve Singer back to tell us about the latest in computer hardware.

At 7:25 pm, John Witmer and William LaMartin became our featured speakers for the evening. Their topic was Microsoft Publisher 2007. John presented a Power Point presentation supplied by Microsoft and William showed us how he utilizes this software in doing our newsletter and other things.

John asked how many here tonight have used Microsoft's Publisher software? Four members stated they have used it for newsletters and to produce signs. John said Publisher could also be used to make business and membership cards, calendars with personalized pictures, greeting cards, brochures and even postcards. John had done newsletters in the past using Microsoft Word. Publisher 2007, however, has much more capability. John then ran the Microsoft

Publisher demonstration showing its vast possibilities.

John then asked William LaMartin to show the group how he uses Publisher 2007 to do our monthly newsletter. William said he would do that, as well as other applications.

William said he has been doing the newsletter since December 1996 and originally used Word but found it difficult to insert pictures and to flow articles from page to page. He then opened Publisher 2007 to show features offered and generally what it looks like.

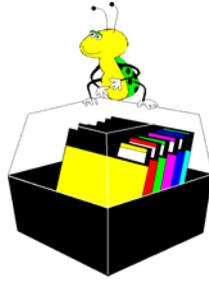
Our newsletter page layout is tricky because it is assembled as a booklet printed on both sides of 11"x17" sheets. Publisher allows you to preview the page layout of the entire booklet. Placing images is easy as text will wrap around pictures. You "make things fit" by trying different font sizes and adjusting the margins. William then showed us how he deletes material from last month's newsletter to turn it into this month's issue, leaving things that don't change as is. He then replaces the deleted material with the new articles and images. Talk about minimizing work! Good show, William!

Next, William showed how to make a tri-fold brochure. Again, both sides of the paper are printed on and properly arranged to be right when folded. Font size, image or logo placement and color selection are important in creating an attractive brochure.

Finally, William showed us the Hyde Park Direc-

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Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.
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First Class Mail

- Member: Your membership is up for renewal*
- Vendor: Your product was reviewed on page ____*

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tory, which he composed and keeps current for his neighborhood. It is published in booklet form and uses data from a Microsoft database for the membership information. He creates reports in Access for the membership information and then saves the reports as Rich Text Files, which are then pasted into Publisher.

Very impressive, but, alas, the clock approached the 9 o'clock hour, and William ended it. Thanks, John and William and Bob, for such an informative evening.

As we adjourned, John Witmer told us of a Publisher 2003 tutorial available for about \$30 if anyone is interested in trying Publisher.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm. ◆

