



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



Vol. 22 No. 10

October 2009

October in Tampa

Meeting

Steve Singer on the latest hardware

Wednesday October 14, 2009

6:30 PM

Pepin Distributing Co.
4121 N 50th Street
Tampa, Florida

Meeting Preview: Steve Singer will make his yearly visit to the group to inform us as to what is new in the world of computing hardware. As usual, Bob Lafave will conduct the Windows SIG at the beginning of the meeting.

Editor's Comments

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

September was a very busy computer month for me. I solved a couple of problems, installed a major update for one of my program suites (which caused the problems), installed the Powerline Ethernet adapters that I write about in this newsletter and wrote several useful little computer programs.

The alternating current power line adapters from Netgear in the article on page 3 were not really purchased to solve a computer problem. The wireless connection to the computer in our back room, while not 100% reliable, was functioning well enough. What really pushed me to find a better LAN connection for that room was the purchase of a new TV which would reside there, replacing a large TV that served us well for 15 years. The replacement, a Sony 40-inch LCD Bravia, had a socket to connect a LAN cable. Thus, the new Ethernet adapters mentioned above. Instead of simply connecting the computer in that room to the adapter, I connected an Ethernet switch I had just sitting unused to the adapter, and, from the switch,

Comments.....Continued on page 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meeting Preview	1
Editor's Comments	1
Minutes	2
Powerline Ethernet Adapter	3
More Windows 7	4
Picture Of The Month	5
Links	5
TPCUG Elections	7
SIGs	7
Map	8

November Meeting: To be announced

**** OFFICERS ****

President: John Witmer (president@tpcug.org)	949-8007
Vice President : Kevan Sheridan (kevan@tpcug.org)	988-6480
Treasurer: Doug Mullis (dmullis@tampabay.rr.com)	234-9343
Secretary: Jim Purcell (Edward_J_P@MSN.com)	985-1676
Member at Large: Ron Weinberg (rswjbr@verizon.net)	960-4132

APPOINTED (Volunteers)

Editor: William LaMartin (lamartin@tampabay.rr.com)	251-3817
Librarian: Larry Anders (Larry@AndersNet.com)	989-9119
Programs: Doug Mullis (dmullis@tampabay.rr.com)	234-9343

Home Page <http://www.tpcug.org>

Bits of Blue is published by the Tampa PC Users Group, Inc., a State of Florida registered non-profit corporation, to provide educational information about personal computer systems to its members. Our mailing address is P. O. Box 3492, Tampa, FL 33601-3492.

However, for business concerning this newsletter, Bits of Blue, please contact the Editor, William LaMartin, at 821 S. Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33606-2904; 813-251-3817; lamartin@tampabay.rr.com.

Technical information found in this publication is not necessarily compatible with your hardware and software, plus other errors or misprints could occur from time to time. Therefore, the use of programs, commands, functions or anything of a technical nature appearing in this publication will be at your own risk.

RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

WE CERTAINLY HOPE YOU WILL

MAIL YOUR CHECK AND ANY
ADDRESS OR NAME CHANGES TO:TAMPA PC USERS GROUP
PO BOX 3492
TAMPA, FL 33601-3492

\$25 Individual	\$35 Family
\$60 Corporate = 3 employees + \$20 each add'l employee	

Go to our web site <http://www.tpcug.org> and click on the
About Us | Join link to join or renew online

Check the address label for your renewal month

Friend of the User Group

*We acknowledge
Pepin Distributing Co.
for their support*

Affiliations

Florida Association of User Groups
Association of Personal Computer User Groups

Minutes of the September Meeting

*By Jim Purcell, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group
Edward_J_P@MSN.com*

The meeting began at approximately 6:35 PM. Bob LaFave opened the SIG meeting with a discussion about the ways that programs can be adapted to the different operating systems. One of the members had a problem with a computer that was taken to Staples for a cleanup. The computer was working fine except that it did not automatically log on to the Internet when the computer was booted, as it had done before the cleanup. He had to turn on the wireless card each time he booted the machine. Bob discussed several possible causes and explained how to go through each to locate the source of the problem. Bob discussed some of the problems in upgrading to Windows 7 from both Windows XP and Vista. Bob again mentioned the full-service cleaner that can be downloaded from Microsoft. He said that it will take a couple of hours to run but that he had gotten substantially improved performance every time that he used it. Bob said that the quickest way to determine your IP address is by using the site <http://whatismyip.com/>. The site also provides other interesting information. Members using Windows XP stated that they are getting a message advising that "Outlook Express needs to compress its folders to save space." Bob says that you can set an option in Outlook Express and Windows Mail to determine how often the message appears. The Windows SIG ended at approximately 7:15 PM.

John Witmer, our president, opened the business portion of the meeting. He mentioned that we had recently received \$50.00 from Amazon.com as a result of routing our purchases from them through our web site. John mentioned that election of Board members will be held in December and the slate will be created in November. He stressed the need for volunteers. John announced that Steve Singer will give the presentation at the October meeting. There was a discussion about the cruise sponsored by FACUG. Our treasurer, Doug Mullis, reminded members to be sure to submit their dues before their membership expires. John welcomed Blain Barton and thanked him for again provid-

MinutesContinued on page 7

Powerline Ethernet Adapter

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

Are there places in your home where you would like to have a LAN connection but running a LAN cable is too difficult and a wireless connection is of poor quality? Do you have \$120 to spare? That is what the NETGEAR XAVB101 Powerline AV Ethernet Adapter Kit will cost you (at Amazon.com, including shipping). It consist of two modules, one of which is pictured to the right. They also supply you with two short LAN cables. Installation is easy. Simply plug one of the modules into an electrical wall outlet near where you receive your Internet. For most of us, that would be near our router. Next, connect one of the provided LAN cables from a socket on the router to the one on the module. Take the other module to where you want the remote connection, plug it into an electrical wall outlet there and, similarly, connect a LAN cable from it to the device you want to add to your local area network. It takes about a minute for each of the adapters to be recognized by the network. At that point, you should be up and running--except for the important item of security.

Security for the adapters can be enabled in either of two ways: Either with the security button on each adapter, or by running the configuration software provided on the CD that comes with the adapters. I chose the latter method, where the first step is to install the configuration utility on your computer. Once the utility is installed, follow the instructions in the user guide (also on the CD)

A word of warning: You will need the MAC address of the remote adapter when using the configuration utility, so copy this from the back of the adapter before plugging it into the wall socket.

Below is a screen shot of the configuration utility, showing my two adapters. You would select the Security tab to do the security configuration.

Powerline Devices: 2		Network Type: Private				
Device Name	MAC Address	Location	Quality	Link Rate (Mbps)	LED Status	Firmware Version
Device 01	00:24:b2:3f2f82	Local	HD Video	200	Enable	INT6300-MAC-3-3-3348-00-2764-2f
Device 02	00:24:b2:3f2f9d	Remote	HD Video	158	Enable	INT6300-MAC-3-3-3348-00-2764-2f

Rename Factory Reset LED ON/OFF

NETGEAR

The new FW will support power saving function, utility can't find the device if the device goes into power saving mode.
Please plug RJ45 cable into power line device to keep power line device active.



The configuration utility installation also installs a firmware upgrade tool. So, at some point after the network is functional, you will want to run this to upgrade the devices' firmware to the latest versions.

It is a bit expensive but sure beats crawling under the house, or putting up with erratic wireless connections. Now, in a far room of our house, the computer is connected to the local area network at 100 mbps, the same as for a wired LAN connection. By the way, pay no attention to the claim in the specifications that it is a 200 Mbps connection. From what I read, that is gotten by adding 100 Mbs for both receive and send.

If you have another room you want to add to the Powerline network, simply order a single adapter. I think the price from Amazon for one is around \$62. Again, this is not as cheap as installing a wireless Ethernet adapter in the remote computer--but it is a whole lot faster and more reliable. ♦

More Windows 7

By Merle Nicholson, Tampa PC Users Group
merle@merlenicholson.com

I've been messing around off and on with the last free version of Windows 7 and then built a new fast computer just in time for the real thing almost a month ago. I couldn't go too far with the testing versions, knowing that whatever work I put in was going to be lost when the final release came out. It helps to keep reading the press and blogs on this subject, so I had been forewarned.

In any case I've had a system going for a bit less than four weeks, and I switched over to it as my primary computer just over a week ago. After installing Windows 7 Ultimate x64, I attached a copy of my data disk and have spent the last week installing software and configuring the system. My personal preference is to never install any software that I could do without. Fortunately, my previous system was Vista Business x64, so I've invested a lot of time in researching software.

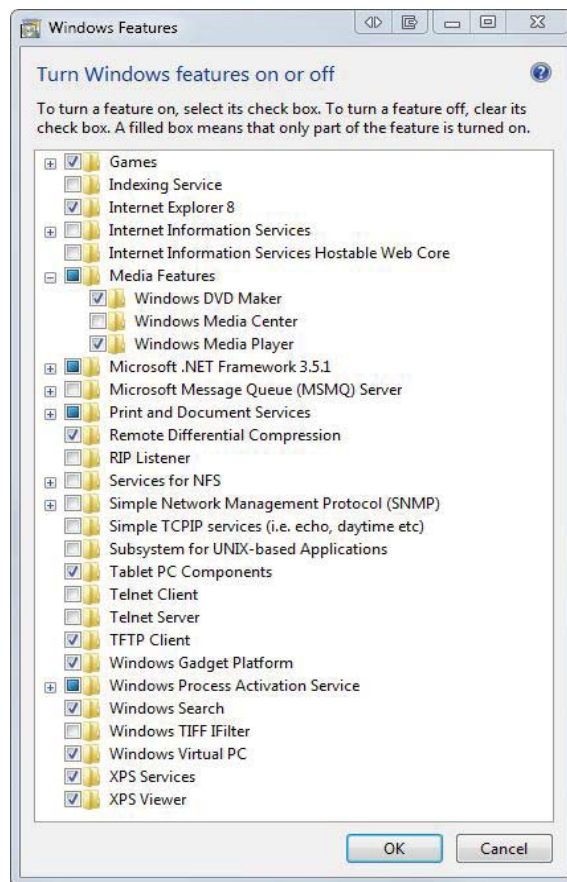
Windows Ultimate has a few things I don't need, so to save computer memory and cpu cycles, I used the "Windows Features" and made sure I didn't have "Windows Media Center" and a couple of other things. While doing that, I actually added a couple of features, and it installed those without asking for the installation DVD.

There's no reason to think that software that works on Vista 64 wouldn't work on Win 7 x64, but I have run into a problem with my old PaintShop Pro 9. When it loads, the screen blinks and a flag goes up to say that the color scheme has been changed to Windows 7 Basic, which I think just eliminates Aero Peek. When I close PaintShop, it reverts back to an Aero theme.

There are quite a few additions that I find very useful. Some were added for Vista.

Virtual PC XP Mode - New

This is a Windows Virtual PC application. Windows Virtual PC 2007 was a free downloadable product, but Windows Virtual PC is now included in Windows 7 Professional, Enterprise, and Ultimate editions. One requirement is a processor capable of hardware virtualization with Intel VT or AMD-V enabled and at least 2GB memory. You configure each machine with a fixed amount of real memory.



With Virtual PC, you can install and configure other operating systems and have them running in a window or full screen. You normally set it up so the virtual machine is connected to your network. One catch, of course, is that you must own a license to that operating system. And just because you have a notebook with XP on it doesn't mean you can use that install CD. The Virtual PC is considered a real machine for licensing purposes.

Now, all this is background. I was getting to XP mode software. It's a free download from MS to a valid legal Windows computer. It contains a free version of Windows XP, so there's no license to purchase. When you have it set up and configured, you can use it like any XP machine. The intention is to have an environment where you can run old software that may not be able to run in Windows 7 (or Vista for that matter). So if you have an old Quicken for Windows 95

Comments.....Continued from page 1

connected cables to the computer and to the TV, with two additional sockets remaining on the switch for other possible connections.

So, with a TV connected to the Internet what can you do? There is no built-in browser in our Sony TV, so no wandering around the Internet. With this LAN connection (and without any cable or FIOS connection), you can:

- Use Widgets provided by Yahoo to check the weather, the news and stock quotes.
- Use Amazon's Video on Demand to rent or buy movies or old TV programs and watch them as they download.
- Watch You-Tube
- Use Netflix when it will be available later this year
- Watch an assortment of videos from different sources like blip.tv, Wired, Epicurious.com and Concierge.com.

If I had a DLNA Certified Media Server, I could connect that to my network, and the TV could access that also to view the images, videos or music there. Although you cannot access anything on the hard drives of computers on the network, the TV has a USB port, so you can plug in a thumb drive containing this type of media, and the TV can access it.

That is all from me for this month. Happily, other contributors have filled the rest of the newsletter. ◆

Internet Picture of the Month



Spider Fun

WSJ Photos of the Week, October 2, from <http://online.wsj.com>.

A large Golden Orb Spider on the face of Wildlife World keeper Borisat in Sydney, Australia. The wildlife park was holding a survey to establish which of two types of animals the public finds more creepy: Snakes or spiders.

I am personally familiar with these large, harmless spiders since they were in an orange grove I owned. They would build their webs across the grove middles, perfectly situated to catch you on the head when driving a tractor down the middles.

October's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)
 rapidshare File Sharing
 The Big Money
 Mannahatta Project
 Map & Imagery Library at the University of Florida
 State Library and Archives of Florida (e-Library)

<http://www.tpcug.org/>
<http://www.rapidshare.com/>
<http://www.thebigmoney.com/>
<http://themannahattaproject.org/>
<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/maps/>
<http://ibistro.dos.state.fl.us/uhtbin/cgisirsi/AcDNRtt64m/STA-FLA/0/49>

Windows 7.....Continued from page 4

with invaluable 1989 expenses, or in my case – Microsoft Arcade – on diskette for 16-bit systems, you're a happy camper. Yes, I did miss my old original Dig Dug and PacMan, but no longer.

There are a few downsides to this, however. One is the real memory requirement, a minimum of 512M. To run well, it needs at least 1GB. Another is that it's slooow to load and start up. That's 1-1/2 minutes slow on my own, very powerful computer (8GB, Quad processor at 3.6GHz). But it does work well. I just realized that it would have been a good solution to running my old trusty USB scanner, instead of throwing it away and getting a new one. Naw, I wanted a new one.

Backup and Restore – improved

The Windows 7 Backup and Restore is finally worthy of using. There are two versions; The version that comes with Professional and Ultimate will back up through your network; Starter and Home Premium will back up, but just to a local or USB drive.

Editions

In case you're confused about the various editions, here's a summary:

Windows 7 Starter – To be pre-installed on new computers by computer manufacturers. The Aero theme is not included, and it's 32-bit only.

Windows 7 Home Basic – For emerging markets, not available in developed countries like the US, Canada, France, Germany etc.

Windows 7 Home Premium – Aimed at the home market, it includes Aero and Windows Media Center. It does lack some features you may want, like logging into a Domain (server) at your business and Remote Desktop Connection.

Windows 7 Professional – Adds Domain, Remote Desktop Connection, Location Aware Printing, Encrypting File System, Presentation Mode and Windows XP Mode.

Windows 7 Enterprise – Volume licensing to large businesses.

Windows 7 Ultimate – All the features of Professional and Enterprise, and adds Bitlocker drive encryption and multi-language support.

Remote Desktop Connection – Has been improved with multi-monitor support. So, if you log into any computer that supports Remote Desktop (Professional and up) from a Win 7 PC with two monitors, that desktop will show up on both your monitors. I like this very much, and I've configured a Remote Desktop for three other computers in the house. Very handy. I also sit at a (slow) laptop in the living room and log into my main (fast) computer, located upstairs.

Upgrading – There are upgrade versions at better pricing for Home Premium, Professional and Ultimate. You can't upgrade from XP to Win 7. You can, however, use the File and Settings Wizard to create a file that copies essential settings and email, favorites and more from your XP machine to Windows 7. But you'll have to reinstall all your applications. Also, you can't upgrade a Vista x32 to Win 7 x64, or a Vista 64 to Win 7 x86 (32-bit).

I can see a reason to upgrade your Vista machine to Windows 7. And if you HAVE to upgrade your XP machine (I wouldn't) there is a pretty good chance it will work. If I just HAD to upgrade an XP machine, I'd disconnect the existing hard drive and put a new one in to install to. You can then just swap back if it all goes badly.

Windows 7 x86 (the 32-bit version) vs. Windows 7 x64:

I've gone through Vista x64, and then Windows 7 x32 Beta, and now Windows 7 x64. I haven't found any disadvantage to using the 64-bit versions. I did lose an old USB scanner, but the new one I got uses LEDs light source and is lightning fast. Two of the four printers date to 2005, and the other two to 2007. No driver problems. The x64 has some advantages, the main one being that it will see all of the memory you can install. In my case I have 8G (4 x 2G), and the motherboard would take 16G (4 x 4G) modules, which are cost prohibitive. If I had used x86 (the 32-bit version), the most memory it could see is under 3G.

The x64 Version is more efficient handling memory, but, most importantly, you have the ability to run Virtual PC and dedicate 2G to it and, also, use a 2G Virtual drive. I use the Virtual Drive for my database

Windows 7.....Continued on page 8

Special Interest Groups

Visual Basic .Net SIG (and sometimes Access SIG)

This SIG meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM. 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.

A Message from your Board of Directors

We are fast approaching the time for election of the Board for the year 2010.

The Board is responsible for all aspects and activities of the Group and provides leadership and for the continued existence of the Group.

We are a relatively small group, one of the smaller groups in the area, perhaps because of geography, but as such, we have the advantage of a more intimate type of meeting.

There is a core group of members who take a more active part.

They all have lives and outside interests, as do all members.

Each of the members of the current Board has served at least two terms.

We urgently need other members to volunteer for the Board.

No positions should require more than a few hours each month.

New members can provide new ideas and a fresh look at things, as well as relieving current members.

Elected Officers are: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Member at Large

Editor, Librarian and Program Chairman are appointed volunteers.

Please consider this request carefully.

Applicants should notify John Witmer our current President by email immediately so as to be included in the forthcoming

Minutes.....Continued from page 2

ing the latest information from Microsoft.

Blain began his presentation, "Migrating from Windows XP to Windows 7," at approximately 7:30 PM. He divided his presentation into two parts. In the first part, he explained virtualization, hypervisor and the tools that he uses to do his presentations. He explained that he uses a server environment that can actually be run in production. He mentioned that the Windows 7 "official street date" is October 22. There is an upgrade Windows 7 version for Vista but not for Windows XP. He explained how he uses snapshots in virtualization to quickly demonstrate various phases of the upgrade. In the second part of his presentation, he covered the many facets of migrating from Windows XP to Windows 7. He talked about using the Easy Transfer Wizard and cable to make transfers needed during the migration. Blain mentioned that you can also use a USB external drive (or a thumb drive) or your network to make these transfers. Blain covered the ways to deal with the many problems arising during the activation of software from the old to the new operating system. He reemphasized that there is not an upgrade version of Windows 7 for Windows XP so the process is a complete replacement of Windows XP and that the transfer of settings and reinstallation of applications is more of an involved process than you would experience with an upgrade. The presentation was followed by a lengthy question-and-answer session.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:35 PM. ♦

Elections.....Continued on page 8

Tampa PC Users Group, Inc.

P. O. Box 3492

Tampa, FL 33601-3492



First Class Mail

Member: Your membership is up for renewal

Windows 7.....Continued from page 6
work, and it's well worth the trouble.

Installing: If there's a device that can't be installed, just wait. At the next reboot, it'll find the right driver on its own. I've seen this many times. Remarkable.

Networking: Easiest I've ever seen.

Windows 7 Ultimate: I don't see any reason for a home or home business to pay the difference. I think the Professional version is a good buy for an experienced user. ◆

Elections.....Continued from page 7
ing proposed slate of officers.

Address your replies to: president@tpcug.org

Thank you. ◆

