Bits of Blue

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

TPCUG 2009

Meeting

Mapping, Photography & Computer Programming
by
William LaMartin

Wednesday November 11, 2009

6:30 PM

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

Meeting Preview: William LaMartin will demonstrate how to combine mapping, photography and computer programming. 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
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Since neither Bill Gates, Steve Wosniak or Larry Ellison were available for our November meeting, you are stuck with me. Don't blame Doug; speakers are hard to come by. However, I think I have some interesting things to show and hope you will find them interesting, too. In the past, I have given programs on computer programming and programs on digital photography. In this presentation, I will combine these with mapping. Thanks to all the developments in recent years, we can do amazing things with maps.

To get an idea of my subject, go to my web site, http://www. lamartin.com and click on the Large Maps/Images button. The programs used in creating these interactive maps and images were almost exclusively Microsoft products. I did use Adobe Photoshop to edit some of the individual images that went into the large compositions.

Microsoft Deep Zoom Composer was used to create the zoom-

December Meeting: Holiday Party

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.

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WE CERTAINLY HOPE YOU WILL

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Minutes of the October Meeting

By Jim Purcell, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group
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The meeting started at 6:35 PM. There was no Windows SIG since Bob LaFave was ill and unable to attend. Steve Singer, who was our speaker for the evening, filled in with a question and answer session before his presentation on new hardware.

Steve began with a broad discussion of Windows 7 changes. He showed a small "Complete Computer" that he said was about as small as you can go at this time. He outlined an impressive list of features and specifications that were available in the small unit. The motherboard is 17 cm by 17 cm. In response to a members request for contact information, Steve provided his phone number, 813-600-1901, and web site, http://www.morevalu.com. He indicated that you can contact him at practically any day or time that there is not a free movie playing in Tampa or its suburbs.

Steve gave a detailed explanation of the various computer-based telephone systems and the cost and limitations of each.

He returned to Windows 7 and discussed in detail the various virtual PCs that are available in Windows 7. He mentioned that his word for updates is "bug-fix." So, if you do not get the updates, you put your system at risk. He brought motherboards and cases for the members to examine and showed the members several unusual products that perform a variety of functions and that he has for sale at bargain prices. Steve's presentation ended at 8:30 PM.

John Witmer, our president, opened the business portion of our meeting at approximately 8:35 PM. He reminded the members of the importance of keeping their dues current. Newsletters are marked when dues are delinquent to help everyone remember. John also mentioned that the election of officers will take place in December and the slate of candidates will be presented by Member-At-Large Ron Weinberg at the November meeting. John expressed his hope that addi-

Continuous Inking System Eliminates the Need to Buy Ink Cartridges

By Ed Cohen, Tampa PC Users Group
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There are many inkjet printers selling for less than $100.00 retail. After the first month or two, you could have spent as much for replacement ink cartridges as for the printer.

Using the web, I had found third party suppliers for cartridges at less than half the price compared to OEM's prices. I also tried refilling cartridges using third party inking kits. This worked well except some OEMs date the cartridges and they will not work after the cartridge is "too old". Of course, you do not discover this until you refill the cartridge and attempt to use it.

Another solution is Continuous Inking System (CIS) from http://www.cisinks.com. They have kits that convert most printers into CIS. The startup kits cost between $25.00 and $60.00, depending on the printer. Bulk ink supplies range from $15.00 to $30.00 for a set of inks to match your startup kit.

The startup kit consists of replacement "cartridges"

for your printer, bulk ink supply and a ribbon hose attached from the bulk ink supply to the ink cartridges, and strapping to hold the ribbon in place.
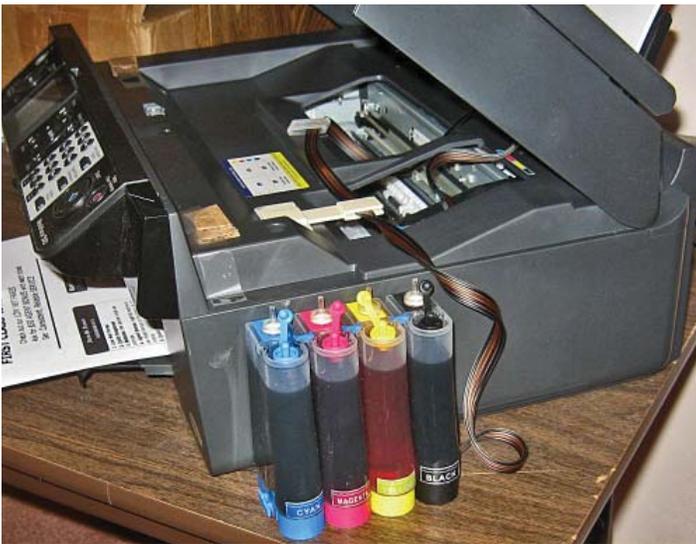
Installation is easy:

1. Remove all cartridges
2. Remove cartridge cover if need be
3. Insert CIS cartridges
4. Tape down the ribbon hose using clips supplied, and you are done

My son has used the system for about one year on three different printers. He prints hundreds of pages each month.

I had two minor problems:

1. Make sure all replacement cartridges snap into position. This is slightly difficult since the individual cartridges are bundled together.
2. I did not have enough space for the ribbon cable to swing back and forth when the printer was closed. It worked perfectly when the printer was open. I taped two spacers to the frame which raised the top another ¼ inch and all was well. ◆

Microsoft Virtual PC
Hardware Requirements

By Merle Nicholson, Tampa PC Users Group
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The newest versions of Virtual PC (VPC) are designed to use "Hardware-assisted Virtualization." It seems to have become a requirement to have this native to your motherboard and processor for VPC to work.

This has come to the forefront since the release of Windows 7. If you have one of the right versions– Professional, Enterprise and Ultimate, then you automatically have VPC. You also have available as a download what's called "Windows XP Mode." This is a licensed version of Windows XP that runs in VPC. When you configure this virtual machine, you set an option to "Auto Publish."

Auto Publish means that, when you install a program in that virtual machine, it places a program shortcut in your host Windows 7 Start menu. So, after I installed my 1995 16-bit "Microsoft Return of Arcade," my Pac-Man icon appears in Windows 7! (Current price for "Return of Arcade: 20th Anniversary Edition": $113.99)

When you launch the Pac-Man program from Windows 7, it appears that Pac-Man was installed directly on Win 7, and the only sense that you get that it's in a VPC is that it takes longer to load. The long load time is from my habit of always shutting down a VPC session, instead of using Sleep Mode.

So, back to the subject of hardware. Windows Virtual PC requires processors capable of hardware-assisted virtualization with AMD-V™, Intel® VT or VIA® VT turned on in the BIOS. If you have a computer and the desire, you still need to know if you have the RIGHT hardware, if it is supported on the motherboard and that it's enabled.

Microsoft thought of everything. There's a free "Microsoft Hardware-Assisted Virtualization Detection

Features	Home Premium Upgrade	Professional Upgrade	Ultimate Upgrade
	$119.99	$199.99	$219.99
Make the things you do every day easier with improved desktop navigation.	✔	✔	✔
Start programs faster and more easily, and quickly find the documents you use most often.	✔	✔	✔
Make your web experience faster, easier and safer than ever with Internet Explorer 8.	✔	✔	✔
Watch many of your favorite TV shows for free when and where you want with Internet TV.	✔	✔	✔
Easily create a home network and connect your PCs to a printer with Home-Group.	✔	✔	✔
Run many Windows XP productivity programs in Windows XP Mode (separate download).		✔	✔
Connect to company networks easily and more securely with Domain Join.		✔	✔
In addition to full-system Backup and Restore found in all editions, you can back up to a home or business network.		✔	✔
Help protect data on your PC and portable storage devices against loss or theft with BitLocker.			✔
Work in the language of your choice and switch between any of 35 languages.			✔

Windows 7 VersionsComparisons

Tool", and here's where you get it:

http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.
aspx?FamilyID=0EE2A17F-8538-4619-8D1C-
05D27E11ADB2&displaylang=en

Remember that this newsletter will be posted on our website, so this link will be "live" for you to click on.

Here's a link to Microsoft Technet "Windows Virtual PC Evaluation Guide."

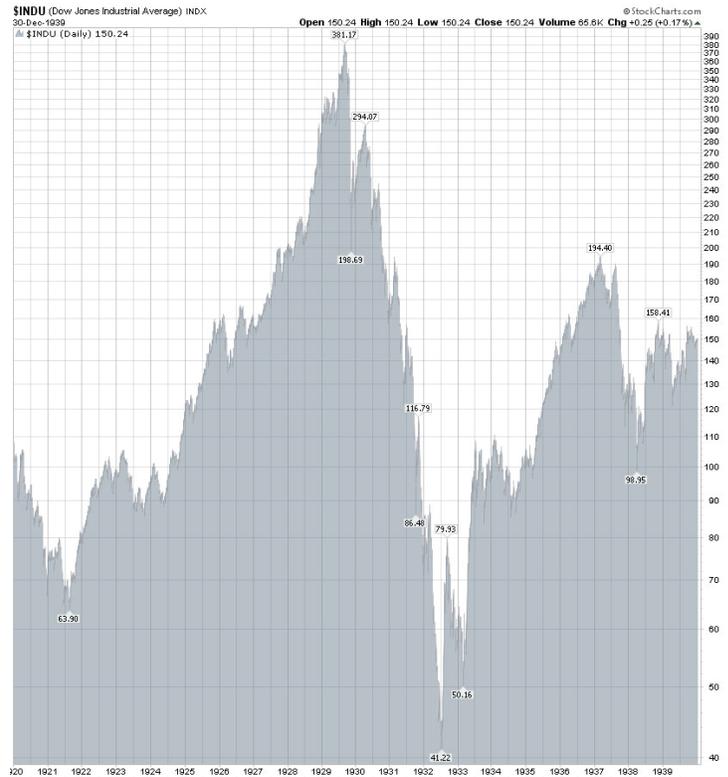http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/
dd744684(WS.10).aspx

This guide has links to the software needed and also comprehsive installation instructions. While we're at it, here's a link to "Which one is right for you?"

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/prod-
ucts/compare?T1=tab20

On a couple of tabs on this page there is a comparison of features for Windows XP, Vista and Windows 7.

More importantly, there's also a comparison on the versions of Windows 7 to help you decide between Home Premium, Professional and Ultimate, which is displayed on the previous page of the article. ◆

Internet Picture of the Month

A Little Stock History

The chart above is from http://stockcharts.com and displays the Dow Jones Industrial Average from 1920 to 1940. It is instructive in that the crash of 1929, followed by a partial recovery in 1930, was nowhere as drastic as the drop following that, which reached its greatest depth during 1932.

November's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)	http://www.tpcug.org/
Noah's Ark	http://www.arkvannoach.com/
Tom's Hardware News	http://www.tomshardware.com/us/
Microsoft Security Essentials	http://www.microsoft.com/security_essentials/
MyHomeServer.Com	http://www.myhomeserver.com/

Linksys Wireless Internet Camera

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

The Linksys WVC54GCA wireless camera, pictured on the right without its power module, is my latest purchase and something I have been interested in for some time. In the November 2007 newsletter, Merle Nicholson wrote about such a device made by D-Link that he had mounted inside his garage and pointed at the garage door to monitor if the garage door was open or closed. That article can be read at http://www.tpcug.org/newsletter/ nl_2007/november2007/wirless_camera.htm. He advises me that, after two years, the camera is still working well and only occasionally requires a reset because of a lost wireless connection.

This Linksys camera functions much the same as Merle's D-Link one. They both have built-in web servers which create their own web pages that you may view if you know their web address. They both can be hard-wired with a LAN cable to a router, or can work as a wireless device off a wireless router. But in two years the technology for these home wireless cameras (as opposed to commercial ones that cost many times more) has advanced a bit. The Linksys camera can produce an image as large as 640 x 480 pixels, and, instead of producing a static image file every few seconds as does the D-Link, it actually produces streaming video, which you may stream at any bit rate you desire. The larger the image and the faster the bit rate, the more bandwidth you use. Such an image is below. It was

taken through the window of my computer room across the edge of my front porch and shows a parked work truck at the house to the left, a man mowing a yard across the street and a black car parked in front.

Additionally, you may also enable mobile streaming so that the stream may be viewed on your mobile device using the Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP), if your mobile device supports this, which my Windows Mobile 6.1 Pocket PC phone does. The camera's web server also creates an .asf file, which may be viewed remotely with Windows Media Player.

So, how do you view the videos produced by these cameras? There are several ways. You can use the Linksys utility that allows you to both configure the cameras and to view all the videos

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.

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for all the cameras you have. I used the utility to do the original setup of my camera. I set it up to be wireless with a fixed local IP address of 192.168.1.120, since I had read on the Internet that using a fixed IP address provided better results. You have to use a LAN cable to do the original setup; then you can move the camera wherever you want that has a good wireless signal. My way of viewing the video is to open a web browser and point it to the assigned IP address for the camera, http://192.168.1.120 in my case. Or, finally, you can use Windows Media Player to play the video at http://192.168.1.120/img/video.asf

What if you want to view the video from Paris? It can be done. Go to the camera's setup, either from within the utility or using a web browser, enable HTTP web connections and assign the camera a port, say 1050. You may also require a user name and password, if desired. Then go to your router's setup and forward port 1050 to 192.168.1.120, the camera's local address. Now, if you know the IP address of your router (which you can find at http://www.lamartin. com/aspx/IPAddress/IPAddress.aspx or at other such services), which, by way of example, we will say is 108.444.200.333, then pointing your Parisian browser to http://108.444.200.333:1050 will produce the streaming video of your camera. That is, it will do that if the IP address of your router hasn't changed since you last checked. In my experience, if you are on broadband, your IP address can stay the same for weeks or more--but there is no guarantee. That is all there is to it. Setting up the Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP) is a bit more complicated.

I should also mention that the camera allows you to stream whatever audio that it picks up along with the video. And there is a built-in motion sensor that will record a video clip of the action and send it to you via email if you wish.

I find the camera produces quite good video and have only one complaint. It doesn't seem able to keep a wireless connection for more than two days. However, this may not be the fault of the camera entirely (or it may be). I am using a standard wireless router (WRT54G V8) and Linksys recommends a WRT350N wireless-N gigabit router with storagelink. So the router may be the problem. My solution was to run a LAN cable to the camera since it was convenient to do that. Now I know I will have a connection.

Cost: $90 from Amazon.com ◆

able versions of the maps. The maps themselves were mostly downloaded from the Library of Congress. The "Additional Maps" were created with Microsoft Map Cruncher which allowed me to overlay an old map on the current map. The "Photos" were also created with Microsoft Deep Zoom Composer, and the "Planar Panoramas" were stitched together with another Microsoft product named Microsoft Image Composition Editor (ICE). Finally, when I wanted to tag a particular photo with a latitude and a longitude, I used Microsoft Pro Photo Tools. All these programs are free, though ICE is officially listed only as a research project.

One final program that I used was Microsoft Visual Studio 2008. While many of the programs listed above produce web-ready results, most still needed some tweaking to make them work the way I wanted. For example, if I want to show or hide an overlay on a map, this sort of thing was done with Visual Studio.

I hope to have a new laptop by the time the meeting rolls around. Some may recall how, during my last presentation, we had to wait while my laptop did a bit

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☐ *Member: Your membership is up for renewal*

Minutes.........Continued from page 2

tional members will volunteer to run for each position. He indicated that the presentation by Dave Roberts for November was being deferred as the planned topic on "POS software" was of little interest to the group; however, Dave may be called on after the start of the New Year for a presentation on something of broader interest to the group. John thanked the members for our increase in income as a result of their participation in the group's Amazon.com program. The meeting ended at 8:45 PM. ◆

Comments.........Continued from page 7

of "thinking." I probably had Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator open, along with Microsoft Visual Studio, and tried to do something that required a lot of processing. And maybe Microsoft or Adobe decided to do an update right then. Anyway, five years seemed about the right time for a new one, and it should probably stop that from happening this time. At least it will if it gets built and shipped on schedule. ◆

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