



Bits of Blue

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



June in Tampa

Vol. 25 No. 6

June 2012

Meeting

**Blain Barton from
Microsoft**

**Windows 8
&
Windows 2012 Server**

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

6:30 PM

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

Meeting Preview: Blain Barton from the local Microsoft office will give a dual presentation on Windows 8 and on Windows 2012 Server and Hyper-V. As usual for the first 30 minutes, Bob LaFave will conduct our Windows SIG.

Editor's Comments

*By William LaMartin, Editor, Tampa PC Users Group
william@lamartin.com*

Windows 8 replay with a virtual drive

Last month I did the presentation on using Oracle's VirtualBox software to install Windows 8 Consumer Preview in a Virtual Machine. I spent a good bit of time on laying out how to set all of this up in Virtual Box. I then began the part of demonstrating Windows 8 and after a few minutes discovered that I did not have the Win 8 Virtual Machine connected to the Internet, something that had never given me a problem at home. A check that the host computer, my laptop, for the Win 8 Virtual Machine was itself connected to the Internet came back positive. A bit of playing with various settings got us nowhere, and the presentation had to proceed and end without actually demonstrating anything in Win 8 that had to use the Internet.

When I returned home, I started up VirtualBox on my laptop and opened the Win 8 Virtual Machine--and, as it had never done at home before, it would not connect to the Internet. I don't recall what actually got the Internet working, but I did get the Win 8

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July Meeting: To be announced

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Association of Personal Computer User Groups**Minutes of the May Meeting***By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
Tampa PC Users Group
merle@merlenicholson.com*

Our meeting was held in one of the large conference rooms at the Pepin facility since our regular smaller room was booked. A special thanks must go to our president, John Witmer, and the Pepin organization for making our meeting facilities possible.

The Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) opens our monthly meeting. The meeting began as usual at 6:30 PM. The SIG is devoted to a discussion of all aspects of the Windows Operating Systems and of computer-related subjects in general. The SIG moderator, Bob LaFave, introduces new or little known products and technological developments for discussion by the group. He accepts questions and requests for help in solving problems from attendees.

This month Bob touched on a variety of subjects: A discussion on the Path environment variable, the use and editing of it. Finding Windows mail when you have lost it. Roadrunner email help, Set Defaults program and its use. Publishing pictures. Creating a document from a Gmail PDF. A quick look at Skydrive and Hotmail; printing PDF and Google Docs. Whew – it ran a bit over, but we covered a lot of ground.

William LaMartin, a very long term member of TP-CUG and our newsletter editor and webmaster, gave a Windows 8 demo and overview and a tutorial on how to set it up on a notebook computer. The Windows 8 Consumer Preview was available for those with the interest and technical skills to load it safely on a computer, and William took advantage of that because of his interest in developing commercial applications. The Consumer Preview is a pre-release version. (Note: By now, an even newer preview is available – called “Windows 8 Release Preview,” and usually there will be a “Release Candidate” before the final release version.) William installed this version as a Virtual Machine in the VirtualBox software. We’re very glad we

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ObiHai Obi 110 VoIP Telephone Adapter

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
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To tie all this together – what I’ve been up to for several months - you may want to look at my January and March articles on “Wireless Home Connect”. And if you’ve been to the meetings lately you’ve seen a presentation on Google Voice that Kevan Sheridan did and how he’s managing multiple phone locations through Google Voice. I’ve used Google Voice for some time now for free calls – but not to any great extent.

To summarize Google Voice, it’s a Voice Over IP (VoIP) telephone service that you can use from your computer or a mobile smartphone device (because it’s a computer). It’s like Skype, except that it’s voice only and well - it’s free and entirely web-enabled and web-trackable. Google has extended the service for the second year free through 2012, after which they may charge if they decide to. What you get with Google Voice is a real telephone number attached to your Google account. You get voice mail as a playable media file and also a text version of the voice message to your Google mail inbox. It calls and receives calls from all other telephones, wireless, landline and VoIP.

To summarize my “Verizon Home Connect,” it’s a stationary cell phone. I abandoned the landline phone to my house and gave up the interior wire maintenance, the telephone charges, the fee for not having a long distance carrier (!), and plenty of federal taxes. I added the new “Verizon Home Connect” device to my wireless plan and connected it to my four-station cordless phone. Kept the old landline number, thank-you-very-much.

Ok – well, where are the pitfalls in this scenario? There’s only one that I have encountered so far – I have to track my cell phone minutes pretty closely. The danger is getting in long conversations on the home phone, because it’s very easy to forget it’s on our shared cell phone minutes. As it turns out, talking

to friends and relatives – we’re all pretty much in the same boat so we use weekend minutes because they don’t count.

Looking at our habits, there are a couple of dangers. The first was unexpected – getting into discussions with service people – say the alarm service, or insurance companies – medical providers, my coffee machine repair service. Oh man, they just don’t care that it takes an hour just to go through their automated menus, only to get cut off. Verizon has the most broken menu system – oh, don’t get me started.

Then I have an occasional business conference call. What a waste of time and never less than an hour.

I can’t tell you how I decided to look for a VoIP device. I use Google Voice, but I got tired of fussing with the sound and microphone settings on my computer. The computer has to be on – naturally, and it’s difficult to switch from speakers to headset on an incoming call. So I never did reveal the Voice phone number to business clients and coworkers. I wanted an office business phone that I could sit on for hours talking to service providers because I have nothing else to do.

I did some real searching for VoIP alternatives, and if you do this you come up with some real confusing things that look like they must be for commercial use for a lot of money. I ran across a forum about Google Voice and saw this thing and then found its website, <http://www.ObiHai.com>. I then found the devices on Amazon and NewEgg. There are other more recognizable brands I discovered, but I’m a great reader of reviews and got the impression that you can configure the Obi devices expressly for Google Voice. Out of three devices I picked the Obi110. There’s a comparison chart of features on the website to help. So I ordered from Amazon – Obi110 Voice Service Bridge and VoIP Telephone Adapter \$50.47 (Do you see why it was difficult to text search to find the products?) and a Uniden DECT1363 cordless phone, \$17.69

The Uniden is a standard cordless phone. I could have gotten something for five bucks. I liked this one; I’ve had this brand before and they seem to last forever.

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Telephone.....Continued from page 3

I didn't want an answering machine, just one single wireless handset.

Ok so what does this guy do? Here's what it looks like:



It's less than five inches on a side and 1-1/2 inches tall. On the back it has two telephone jacks, One Ethernet jack and a power supply socket for the power cube. So you cable it to your router, plug your telephone in the correct jack and power it up. You configure it – more about that in a moment – and it becomes a telephone. And you did it without even discussing it with Verizon.

I guess here's the place to say again. It's free. There are no monthly charges because Google Voice is free, the device setup with OBiHai is free, and there are no monthly charges from OBiHai. It's free.

For configuring it, first – get a Google Voice account. Before that – get a Gmail account in case you're the last person on earth without one. From your Google account just sign up for Google Voice and get the telephone number. You select the telephone number from the available telephone numbers in the country. So you can have an area code anywhere you want. Give that some thought. It shows up on caller id displays wherever you call unless you block it. If you block your caller id, don't bother calling ME, because I won't answer. I hope that when President Obama calls me to ask for advice on the economy, he's using caller

id. To get the Google Voice number assignment you have to establish an account so they can charge you if they ever get around to doing that. I have had an account because I have an Android phone and I purchase Mobile Phone Apps from their app store. (Now called "Play Store"). So it was easy to get the Google Voice account set up. That – for me – was more than a year ago.

With the Gmail account and Google Voice account set up and the OBi110 connected – you need to get your IP address handy and also know your Gmail email account name and password. To get your IP address, you use a website like <http://whatsmyip.com>. At the top of their page is your IP address at the time you queried it. It's a four-number group separated by dots like 12.12.123.12. You can also get this address by logging into your router. It's usually displayed prominently.

Google voice
Easy to Set-up & Use



To configure the OBi110, you go to their website and click on the image at the left. All the steps are there, including a video, a step-by-step tutorial and troubleshooting guides. But basically, you go to <http://www.OBiTalk.com> and register. You'll need to fill in your Gmail username and password and your IP address. You'll need to have logged into Gmail and do a couple of Google Voice settings. I'd say I spent a half hour getting the phone configured. Instructions come with the device; it's pretty easy.

This device can be configured to work with many other services. It can serve as a bridge from any phone device you can call in on, and it will complete the call to your POTS line. There are apps for iPhone and Android to make it easy to call into your system and use it to forward your calls. It has all the Star Code features that all phones should have – redial, block caller id, call forward, block anonymous calls, call waiting.

In use, it's pretty simple – frankly I don't think about it. There are some green lights on the device; two must be solid green and one is flashing. As long as this happens, it's active and I don't concern myself. It's worked flawlessly since the day I activated it. ♦

Internet Picture of the Month



US troops landing on D-Day, June 6, 1944

From the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library via Wikimedia.org at a URL that is much too long to put here. The full title is “Into the Jaws of Death - U.S. Troops wading through water and Nazi gunfire.”

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Virtual Machine connecting to the Internet. The only thing that I can come up with that would be the cause is that the Virtual Machine does not like being moved from one IP address to another. I am sure there is a way to quickly fix this problem in the future, but I no longer need one. I have changed how I run Win 8 from running in a Virtual Machine inside VirtualBox to residing on a Virtual Hard Drive.

Without getting technical, a Virtual Hard Drive (VHD) is just a file (see the file WIN8.VHD in the screen capture later) on your computer’s hard drive that has

been configured so that when the computer boots it is recognized by the Windows Boot Manager as a separate hard drive containing an operating system if additionally an operating system has been installed on it. You will then be given the option of choosing which operating system to boot. In my case it was Windows 7 or Windows 8.

This sounds a lot like a dual boot system, but it differs in that in a true dual boot scenario your hard drive is partitioned into more than one partition with different operating systems installed on the different partitions.

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June’s Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that’s us)
 NYC Randel Farm Map
 D-Day, June 6 1944
 Dual Boot Windows 8 from VHD

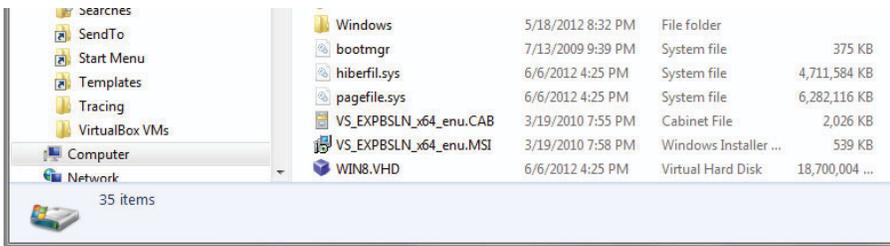
<http://www.tpcug.org/>
http://www.mbpo.org/free_details.asp?id=371
<http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/normandy/nor-pam.htm>
<http://blog.concurrency.com/infrastructure/dual-boot-windows-8-from-vhd-using-windows-setup/>

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Here we have the VHD file playing the role of the extra partition.

The advantage of running Win 8 on a VHD instead of on a Virtual Machine inside VirtualBox is that there is no virtualization, and that means fewer problems (such as not getting on the Internet at User Group meetings and not having access to the computer's camera) and, in general, having full access to all the computer's peripherals.

There is, however, a catch: It is much easier to set up a Virtual Machine and install an operating system on it in VirtualBox than it is to create a VHD and install an operating system on the VHD. At least this will be true the first few times you try the process, since it is



done from the command prompt. Then there is this small item: If things are not done properly, you may destroy your current operating system by overwriting it with the new operating system you think you are putting on the VHD. I know because I did it.

I was lucky on my first attempt at creating a VHD and installing the Windows 8 Consumer Preview. I used that setup for a few days and found it much nicer than working with the Virtual Machine in VirtualBox. Then Microsoft pushed out a newer version of Win 8 termed Windows 8 Release Preview. So I went to the Microsoft site and downloaded the iso file for it, burned the iso file to a DVD, booted the laptop from it and was quite quickly presented with the message: "You can't upgrade Windows on a virtual drive." That meant that I needed to create a second VHD on my laptop and install the new Win 8 version there.

As to what went wrong during the installation of a second VHD, the best I can figure is that, when I was given the opportunity to install Win 8, I chose the

drive my Win 7 was on. It was late at night, I was tired, and the process was a bit complicated. Anyway, the result was that when the new version of Win 8 installed on what I thought was the VHD and I rebooted, I had only one operating system: Windows 8. Windows 7, along with all my programs and data on the laptop, was gone, as was the VHD file containing Win 8 Consumer Preview. Quite a disaster.

But that is why you have backups. I knew I was a bit in over my head, so before doing any of the above, I cleaned up the laptop's hard drive to give me plenty of space for the first VHD file I was going to create (it was to be made expandable up to 60 GB). I then used our old friend Acronis True Image Home 2010 to do the backup. I had not gotten around to installing the newer version, Acronis True Image Home 2012, that I had purchased when Gene Barlow visited a few meetings back.

When I realized I had destroyed my Windows 7, I booted the laptop from an Acronis bootable disk, set it to restore the laptop to the way it was a few days back and went to bed. The next morning I booted the laptop and checked on my main programs and files, and everything seemed to be in good form. Now to create a new VHD and install Windows 8 Release Preview and to not make a mistake.

If you would like to possibly destroy your current operating systems, here is a link to the steps to create a VHD and install Win 8 on it. There are a number of other such links. Just do a search for install Windows 8 on virtual hard drive.

<http://blog.concurrency.com/infrastructure/dual-boot-windows-8-from-vhd-using-windows-setup/#Beta>.

Acronis Tip

Earlier I mentioned how backing up with Acronis True Image Home had saved me from a very serious loss. Now let me give you a tip on how to save a bit of typing. One reason I was still using an older version of Acronis was that in order to install the new

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version I purchased from Gene Barlow at our meeting was it required you to type in a serial number of 64 characters plus five hyphens. That was a bit much. I sent an email to Gene and presented my problem. He said to email him the first eight characters for each of the CDs I had purchased. He then emailed me back the complete 69 character serial number for each, so that I could then just copy and paste in the serial number to do the installation.

Eye-Fi

My son likes to carry a very small digital point-and-shoot digital camera with him. The one he had was a number of years old, so for his birthday we decided to give him a new one. I wanted one slightly larger than the smallest you could buy because it had more of the features I would like, such as WiFi, a larger optical zoom and most importantly a GPS. My wife assured me that he wanted something really small, and she ferreted out that it was indeed the case. So the camera we purchased was a Canon Powershot Elph 110 HS. This is a 16 megapixel camera, and its dimensions are only 0.8 x 3.7 x 2.2 inches; 4.8 ounces. Now that is a small camera. And it takes quite good photos; much better than you will get with your phone camera. But this is not really about that camera. It is about what came next.

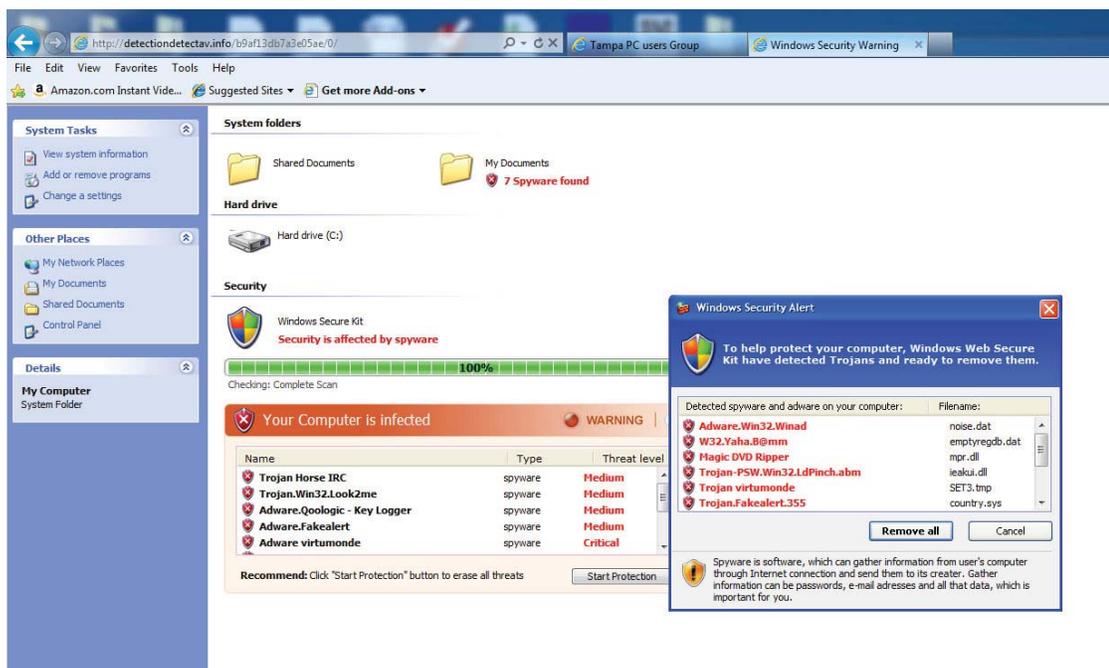
When my son visited Tampa a few days later, we were talking about the lack of a GPS and why that was the main reason I thought the other camera would have been better (at least for my taste). I don't recall how, possibly due

to an Internet search about GPS and cameras, possibly because my son had heard about such, we came up with a product named Eye-Fi that is a SDHC memory card that has WiFi built in. How they get all that in a tiny SD card is a mystery to me, but they do and it works.

At first I thought the card also had a GPS receiver, which really astounded me, but later had it pointed out to me that the GPS data the card recorded for each photo was based on WiFi location data. Better than throwing a dart at a map but not as accurate as a real GPS receiver. However, in the test we did at my house, the latitude and longitude were right on the money. How did it know that? Is my wireless router one of the ones for which Google recorded the position?

The setup is as follows: The card comes with a USB card reader in which you put the card and then insert it into your computer that is connected to your wireless network. Once your computer has recognized the card, select the Open Folder to View Files option, navigate to the Start Here Folder and then click on the Setup.Exe file. That will install the required software on your computer. After that you are set to go. Put the card back in your camera. Then, when you take a photo, it will automatically insert the GPS info into the file's EXIF header information when it is saved by the camera to the SD card. Later, when you have the camera near your wireless network, the photo files will be automatically download to your computer.

You may read about this item at <http://www.eye.fi/>. It comes in different versions: four or eight GB, with or without geo-tagging. My son's is the 8 GB with geo-tagging.



Beware of fake security warnings. While trying to move from viewing Nola.com in IE to Bloomberg.com, I saw some sort of message flash up and then disappear from the notification part of the task bar. Then what appears to the left filled up my monitor screen (I have cropped out the right-hand side and bottom

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Member: Your membership is up for renewal

Minutes.....Continued from page 2

have William to go out there and then show us what we can look forward to.

William showed us the process to get this installed, and he then went into the Win 8 desktop and also showed the new Metro interface to see what that is going to look like. After passing through the Metro interface, the underlying settings pages show little change from Windows 7. But the demo should not be taken to represent the final configuration. The final features are still to be decided.

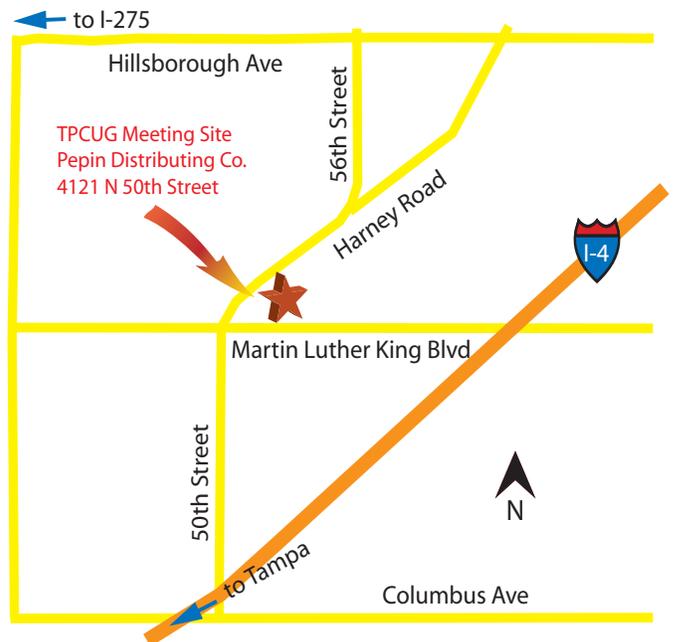
Our thanks go to William and the preparation he took to show us Windows 8. ◆



Comments.....Continued from page 7

where there was nothing).

The effect was to make you think you had a Microsoft Security warning on your computer. But, if you look closely at the image, you realize that what you are seeing is actually a graphic in a web browser page with



a popup in front that has a button they expect you to click on. I am sure that a click on that button would have caused all sorts of bad things.

I suspect the Nola.com page was infected. So, when in doubt, don't click. ◆