



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



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December 2012

December in Tampa

Meeting

Meeting Preview: Holiday Party

Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

6:30 PM

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

Editor's Comments

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

This is again pretty much a Merle Nicholson newsletter, for which I am again extremely grateful, but he did leave me a little space to fill.

This month he tells us how to set up a new computer with two hard drives: A solid state drive for your operating system and programs and a regular hard drive for your data, temporary files, email files, your desktop, pictures, etc. The process is a bit complicated and certainly time consuming. But if you want a computer that boots fast and runs at optimum speed, this is the setup you want. I went through this process two years ago when I set up Windows 7 on a new desktop machine that Merle built for me then.

This past month I came up with another idea for a Windows 8 application that will make me no money but that should be of interest to a few old-time PC people along with the members of this group. It will allow you to read all of our newsletters beginning in 1988 up through 2012 with the ability to search the entire collection for any word or group of words. I almost

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January Meeting: To be announced

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Friend of the User Group*We acknowledge
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Association of Personal Computer User Groups**Minutes of the November Meeting***By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
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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 – the main discussion was about Windows Surface, IE9 on Windows XP and Chrome. Ways to send anyone money was a good topic that brought some discussion. And last, Office 13 on Windows 7 and 8; Bob gave a quick demo of Word and Outlook and the difference of the Pro version.

The presentation this month was given by William LaMartin, of LaMartin Software (and the Tampa PC Users Group). LaMartin Software (that's William) has a large collection of programs available for Windows Phone and two apps for the Windows 8 PC platform. There are too many to devote much time here to, but his collection of Windows Phone programs – available on the Microsoft App site: Manhattan 1905, Simple BART, Simple Grocery, Simple Volume, Boston Mosaic, Simple Stocks, Simple Walk and several others.

William started up Visual Studio 2012, the programming development platform used for all these programs. In there are environments called emulators that simulate the target device, so he could demonstrate several – just as you would see them on the device it was intended for. So he gave us some live demos of just a few of his applications. Cell Towers, Manhattan 1905, World News (one of my favorites) and BART on the telephone – that's the Bay Area Transit subway system in San Francisco. For Windows 8 Phone, we saw a speech test of a program William is currently

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Optimizing Windows 7 and 8 for a Solid State Drive

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary,
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We're going to set up a computer with a solid state drive (SSD) primary boot disk and a second conventional data drive. It makes sense; we want an SSD for fast boot and for fast program startup. For that, an SSD is the way to go. We need more storage for documents, email and contacts, appointments, music, pictures, downloads, image files and data. A conventional mechanical drive is the answer for this. SSDs are relatively expensive and mechanical hard drives are inexpensive. The current technology is merging the two products and reducing the price, but we have a way to go. In the meantime, you can get a 64GB SSD for under a hundred bucks if you're patient.

There are a couple of other considerations, ones that influence the design of our system.

Backups We must do backups, and we may as well optimize our system with this in mind. We want a "system image" backup to quickly restore our boot drive. System Image backup is a backup file of the entire drive. When your system has failed and you need to restore from backup, you don't need a system image that has your entire music collection! All you need is a small, clean boot drive. Your backup should go to a drive that is externally connected. Win 7 Home and Home Premium OS will not back up to a networked drive. A USB or eSATA drive is fine. USB 3 is even better. You cannot retrieve an individual file from a system image.

A data drive is different though. Here you want a file system backup where you can find individual files and even look for earlier versions of a file. A regularly scheduled backup of just the files that have changed is ideal. You don't need a system image of this drive; they're just files.

There are files though that you don't need in a backup

at all. TEMP directories, Temporary Internet files, Pagefile, Hibernate file, Search Index Files. I have 52GB of such files. I have a third drive for this purpose, and my automatic backups don't touch these. No need.

Ideally, you would follow the practices I'll be describing on a new computer, or at least a new Windows installation on an old computer. It CAN be done on an existing system but it's just more work.

SSDs The thing to consider is that SSDs have special needs. One, you don't schedule chkdsk and repair and you don't optimize (defrag) SSD's. Why? They are already optimized. If you move files around to shove them together they don't retrieve files any faster and you're hastening the eventual failure (a little) every time they get rewritten. You don't want files that are being constantly rewritten, like pagefiles or search indexes and temporary Internet files on your nice SSD. Your system won't run any faster anyway with these on the SSD. Running faster is the reason you invested in an SSD in the first place. Look at the maintenance schedule in [Start, Run, Disk Defragmenter](#). Make sure there is no scheduled defragmentation on your SSD. Windows should have turned it off for all SSDs, but it needs checking.

My System The arrangement I have put into practice on my Windows 8 computer is as follows:
C: drive – Windows boot installation, a 64GB SSD. 38GB is used out of 59GB formatted. On my primary Windows 7 computer I'm using 43.8 GB. I have moved as many data directories to the data drive as possible. This is backed up irregularly to a system image on a portable drive using Windows Backup and Restore. Note: If you're thinking I don't have much software installed on this computer and you'll have more, you'd be wrong. It IS well organized and maintained, though irregularly. Irregularly means I make a new system image whenever I think I've made enough changes to software or installed or uninstalled something.

D: drive The D drive, the data drive, is 1 TB partitioned into two parts – D: and G:. This has all the

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above mentioned files: documents, email and contacts, appointments, music, pictures, downloads, image files and client data. It is file-backed-up on a regular schedule to a portable drive using Windows Backup and Restore.

G: Drive This is formatted to about 73 GB with 52 GB used. It has SearchIndex Files, TEMP, TMP, Temporary Internet Files and Pagefile.sys and is never backed up. It's a partition on the same physical drive as D:. I could just as easily have used an old drive from a previous system, but not a slow clunker.

How it's accomplished: When Windows is installed, it creates directories and libraries for all your stuff. And all these directories are on the C: drive. So you have to do two things. **One** – either move the directory and its contents to the data drive and tell Windows where it is now, OR recreate the directory in a new location and tell Windows where it is. **Two** – A bunch of other stuff, such as making a setting in Control Panel, Internet Options, General, Browsing history, Settings, and use the Move button to move the Temporary Internet Files directory. Do something similar for Outlook, Windows Mail ... etc. – you get the idea.

The following is a pretty formidable list of things to do. There's no need to read on unless you're truly interested in doing this or don't have anything better to do. Although I've done this several times there will be something I've left out, so if you think of something useful – send me an email and I'll add it and update this documentation.

How to move data to the TEMP drive G:

Notation convention: I'm trying to use the underline to denote a specific label or object like a button. If I have Enter the amount of space to shrink, this means there really are those words to look for on the setting panel.

Folder Options: You'll have a very frustrating time following the steps I have here without changing Folder Options first. Go to Control Panel, Folder Options, View tab. Select (enable) Show hidden files,

folders and drives and then uncheck Hide extensions for known file types and uncheck Hide protected operating system files. You may want to re-check Hide protected operating system files later when we're done.

Temp Drive Creation: I created my G: drive using Start, Administrative tools, Computer Management, Storage, Disk Management, Right-Click D: drive, Shrink Volume, Entered 75,000 MB in Enter the amount of space to shrink, and clicked Shrink. That left a 75GB unlocated drive, from which I created a Simple volume, Label TEMP, Mount as Drive G and formatted as NTFS. If you uncheck the Quick Format the disk will format in 20 minutes or less. The result is a data drive D and a TEMP drive G on the same physical drive.

TEMP, TMP and Windows\TEMP: In the G drive I created the folders TEMP, TMP and Windows. In the Windows folder, I created two folders TEMP and TMP.

In Control Panel, System, Advanced system settings. In Performance, select the Settings button, then Advanced tab, and Virtual memory, Change button. You're now looking at a settings panel called Virtual Memory. Clear the check box Automatically manage paging file size...., Select C drive, then No paging file, and press Set button. Do the same for the D: drive. For the G: drive you can either click on System Managed file or set a Custom size. I set a Custom size equal to my installed memory. In my case, 8,000 for Initial size and for Maximum size. Click Set button here. Don't forget that. This will require a reboot to take effect, but we're returning to setting TEMP variables. So an OK on Virtual Memory. OK on the warning about rebooting. OK on Performance Options, and we're back to System Properties, Advanced tab.

In the System Properties, Advanced tab, click the Environment Variables button. Edit the User variables for {loginName}. Click on the TEMP line, click Edit button, edit to G:\TEMP. Then edit the TMP line to G:\TMP. Under System Variables, scroll down to TEMP and Edit the line to G:\Windows\TEMP. For TMP, I used G:\Windows\TMP. OK on Environment Vari-

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Internet Picture of the Month



HMS Bounty Sinks

Hurricane Sandy sinks the HMS Bounty replica of the coast of North Carolina on its way to St. Petersburg. This is a Getty Image that was used at many sites on the Internet. This copy came from the site <http://womc.cbslocal.com/2012/10/30/tall-ship-hms-bounty-sunk-by-hurricane-sandy/>

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have the application completed and just did a couple of searches for words like holiday party or Christmas party or just party or just Christmas, and it appears that we had our first end of the year party in 1999.

I also did a search for autoexec.bat and found 41 pages beginning in 1989 and ending in 2000. Do you even

recall what an autoexec.bat file was? Do you recall the software company Delrina? No? Well, there are 51 pages with them mentioned. And I note that the word Internet first appears in July of 1992. You can search until you have run out of words, or you can simply start with the first newsletter and browse through it and those that follow. ◆

December's Interesting World Wide Web Locations

Tampa PC Users Group (that's us)

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

PriceGrabber.Com

<http://www.pricegrabber.com/>

Cathedrals - Cathedrals of the World

<http://www.sacred-destinations.com/categories/cathedrals>

Beer Me - Beer info

<http://beerme.com/>

The Verge - Technology, science, culture

<http://www.theverge.com/>

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ables. While we're here, I always go to Startup and Recovery, Settings button, and under System Failure, I clear Automatically Restart check box. If I have a failure, I want to see what the error is, and I certainly don't want it to automatically restart. I can't believe this is checked by default for the last 10 years.

Temporary Internet Files: Control Panel, Internet Options, General tab, Browsing history, Settings button. Tab Temporary Internet Files. There's a button Move folder . . . Select the G drive. It will create a new location G:\Temporary Internet Files. Wasn't that easy? In Windows 8, the system logs you off after asking permission.

Indexing location: This relocates the index files created for fast file searches. If you have a lot of files, and you also want everything indexed as I do, the index files can be large. I don't see the point in backing them up because they're constantly changing, and the indexing service will reproduce them whenever needed. Whether it is moved to the D data drive or the G TEMP drive is up to you. For me, they must be removed from the SSD because they're so volatile. Control Panel, Indexing Options. Select Advanced, and Index Setting tab, Select new button. Click on G and Make New Folder. I named the folder SearchIndex. Select the new folder and OK.

While you're here, you may want to review the file indexing drives and folders. I tend to check everything in C: and D: except for the Recycle Bins, and obviously do not include anything on the G TEMP drive. Ok and Close. You'll see that the indexing service will be hard at work for a while.

After a reboot is the time to manually delete all the files in the old TEMP, TMP and Temporary Internet files. I would not delete these old directories. There will always be some errant program that will look for a TEMP directory in the old location.

Miscellaneous tuning and improvements

Hibernate: Before we go on to the Document directories, let's get rid of the file hiberfil.sys in the root

directory. This is used to Hibernate, and has no place on a desktop machine with an SSD boot drive. It's a significant amount of file space. (Mine was 23GB!) Open a Command Prompt from its shortcut by right-clicking and Run as administrator. Enter powercfg -h off. This also eliminates the Hibernate choice in Start, Shutdown and also in power settings. If you change your mind about this later on, you can change it back using on in the command line.

Logon: Next, let's make it so that when you power on your machine, you go right to the desktop without logging on. In Start, Run, enter netplwiz. This is the advanced User Account Setting. On the Users tab, clear the checkmark next to Users must enter a user name and password Doing this is NOT appropriate unless you have every expectation that you can maintain who can access your computer. You would NEVER do this on a notebook that ever left your household. Otherwise, keep the logon and password. While you're here, the Advanced tab is where you can manage passwords and secure logon settings

Performance Tuning: Last, let's do some performance tuning. Control Panel, System, Advanced system settings. In Performance Settings button, then Visual Effects tab. If you experiment here, you'll see that if you have a reasonably powerful machine that if you choose Let Windows choose or Adjust for best appearance it will check on all options, and Adjust for best performance will uncheck all options. A little experimentation will help you make a compromise between the appearance and performance. For myself there are some appearances that I consider the mainstay of Windows 7; Enable Aero Peek, Enable desktop composition, Show thumbnails instead of icons, Show window contents while dragging (I would not select this on a weak machine or weak graphics), Smooth edges of screen fonts, Use visual styles on windows and buttons. I just don't notice the difference if I check anything else. I also uncheck (clear) the box Enable transparency in Control Panel, Personalization, Window Color. That's a personal preference of course, but I think it's significant that it isn't an option on a system with a weak graphics adapter. I also Adjust the ClearType in Control Panel, Appearance and Person-

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alization, Adjust ClearType text, and of course make sure ClearType is enabled.

Later, you will want to look at all your startup items and eliminate all the junk. And after you install programs, it will be loaded with even more. In Start, Run, enter msconfig and then the Startup tab. Here you will find that there will be a Google Update, and Google Chrome, iTunes and Adobe updates; lots of HP items that makes your printer and scanner look at you 24/7. Uncheck all that crap and see how things go; you can always restore the check later if something doesn't work right. You'll need your Security Client (anti-virus) intact, but you definitely do not need your Java platform and Adobe calling home every time you boot. Believe me, your iTunes will work just fine without the startup item. There is a lot written on this subject, and if you are on the fence about something just ask Google about it.

Relocate Data to the D: drive.

If you look at the properties of some folders, you'll see an extra tab called Location. Right-click and get Properties of the folder C:\Users\{AccountName}\Desktop and you'll see one of these. On this tab you'll find a quick explanation and the means to move any existing files to a new preexisting folder. We'll use this to move much of the default data locations to drive D. When we're done, when you open Word or Documents or Pictures, you'll go to the files stored on your data drive D:. One caution; if you have multiple logins – Administrator and user accounts for other people; this procedure must be repeated for each account.

Create a new Users folder in the D: Drive. That's D:\Users. Inside of Users, create a user account named folder. Mine is named D:\Users\Merle. Don't use mine unless your name is Merle. Under D:\Users\Merle create 10 new folders named Contacts, Desktop, Downloads, Favorites, Links, My Documents, My Music, My Pictures, My Videos and Searches. These are the folders we're going to use the move functions on the Location tabs. I'm not aware of any others. After creating these folders, use the properties of each in their original locations to move them. As you do

these, the old folders themselves will disappear by the process. I know; it makes no sense; if the folders are deleted automatically, why are the new ones are not created automatically, too? Remember to do this for every user name that logs onto the computer. That was easy. It's the heart of this article, and it was the easiest to describe.

Mail: If you are using Microsoft Windows Mail, add a folder D:\Users\Merle\Windows Mail, and if you're using Office Outlook, add a folder D:\Users\Merle\Outlook. These locations are optional of course. Sometime I put the mail directories under My Documents, but usually under D:\Users\Merle. If you have started using either Outlook or Windows Mail, it's fairly easy to go into the setting of these and change the file locations, carefully recording the original location, copying the contents or moving the entire folder to the new location, change the mail setting. Microsoft Outlook is much more complicated than this. While it's easy to relocate the main mail .pst file, there are other files to consider; contacts, address book, calendar and mail account settings, and categories. They are NOT in the same folder. Crazy, huh? The locations of these are well documented on Microsoft Office help sites. It's easiest if you do not have mail accounts set up yet, so there is no risk.

Finally: You have to be diligent, at least for a while, and every time you install and use a new program. A new program will have its preprogrammed location to store your newly made file, and that location may not be My Documents and especially maybe not on the D: drive where you want everything kept. So in saving a file, pay particular attention to where it initially wants to save and change that to an existing or new directory on D:. Then look at the programs settings and see if there's a default directory you can set yourself. The object of course is to keep the amount of disk used on your SSD to a minimum, but more importantly to locate all files in a common location for your scheduled backups. ♦

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First Class Mail

Member: Your membership is up for renewal

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working on, and, for Windows 8, a Cell Tower application the – cell towers in the US from the FTC database combined with Bing maps. Our heartfelt thanks go to William for his interesting presentation and the time he devoted to preparing it.

John Witmer concluded the meeting with a reminder of the plans for the December 10 holiday party and the plans for the Board for the coming year. ♦

