

About PPCUG

General Meetings

Second Monday of the month at the Lawrenceville Library.

Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

7:00-7:45 PM: Social Time / Tech Corner

7:45 PM: Meeting Comes to Order

8 PM: Featured Presentation

For information about upcoming meetings or joining PPCUG call 908-218-0778 to leave a message.

Board Meetings

Third Monday of the Month

8 PM at Lawrenceville Library.

Board meetings are open to All.

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Annual Dues Rates

Normal dues rate is \$30 per year.

New Members Only: after February, the rate is \$2.50 per month times the number of months remaining in the year.

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Coming Events

March 12, 2001 - Broadband Cable Internet Services

Learn about Cable Modems and services provided by Comcast@Home

April 9, 2001 - General Meeting -TBD

May 5 & 6 - Trenton Computer Festival - TCF2001

PPCUG Parcel Pickup!

May 14, 2001 - General Meeting - TBD



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

Does technology ever get you down? Sure it does! Despite all the advances in hardware and software, things still go wrong with your PC. I relate the support of a PC to my days in sales where we believed in the old 80/20 rule. This is where 80 percent of your business comes from 20 percent of the customers. In applying this rule to PC's, I believed that 80 percent of your time is spent maintaining the PC and the remaining 20 percent doing useful work. Well it may not be that bad, but some days you may feel that all you do it trouble shoot your PC to get that CD-ROM drive to read properly or any number of hardware related problems.

Well at this month's general meeting Tom Canavan and I will show you the inter-workings of a PC. We will try to explain what can go wrong and the possible steps in troubleshooting hardware problems. We will cover all the major components of the motherboard and all the connections including installing the CPU and memory. Then we will connect the floppy drive, install a video card and boot it up. Not very difficult or scary stuff if you are just careful. It should be a fun night, as you never know what can go wrong or right doing a live demo. Please bring your hardware related questions, as this will be a free flowing meeting of information and answers.

Thanks to John Stroiney from Microsoft for doing an excellent presentation on Windows Millennium Edition OS. John pointed out many of the exciting new features found in Win ME and some of the reasons for upgrading to it. Congratulations to our raffle winners Frank Foulkes, Bruce Gunther, and Ed Goldberg as I hope they are enjoying the Microsoft software they took home with them courtesies of John. I hope that we will see John Stroiney again later in the year to hear more about some of the new products being released in 2001.

Articles, articles, articles! I am always looking for articles for the newsletter. As the newsletter editor/President, I receive a number of e-mails from various vendors asking our group to check out their software application. I would like to create a group of our members who would like to take on the task of reviewing some of these applications. The reviews do not have to be elaborate or long (500 words), but just explain what the application does, how it worked on your PC and if you had to pay for it, would you.

Lastly, thank you to the many members who have renewed their membership for 2001. To those who have not renewed yet, thanks for being with us last year, as this will be the last newsletter you will receive.

Remember, the meeting is February 5th, the first Monday of the month. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Windows Tips: Watch Your Associations

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

This article is a continuation of the discussion that was begun in December of how Windows manages files. (See <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/dec00.pdf> or <http://www.nerc.com/~srnet1/pages/File%20extensions.htm>.) The previous article covered the role of extensions in filenames and should be read first. In this article I will go over some aspects of file associations.

It is a refrain that constantly echoes throughout the Newsgroups and other discussion forums. "I can't open my XYZ files with my favorite program anymore. Some other program keeps popping up instead. What happened?" Or, "I have XYZ files and Windows won't open them. What do I do?" Over and over I encounter these and related questions in my personal discussions with PC users and with students in classes I teach. In all these cases, an understanding of how Windows decides which software is supposed to carry out a particular action with a file would provide the answer. Software that is assigned to do something with or to a particular type of file is said to be "associated". Learning how to manage these file associations is not difficult and allows the average user to deal with many common Windows problems.

How Windows Manages File Actions

In the Registry is a list of file types that are registered for a specific computer. The list contains what actions are possible for that particular file, which software is supposed to carry out the action, and where on the computer that software is located (the path). All file types will have at least one possible action called the Default. Many file types may have several possible actions, often using different software. The Default action is the one that double left-clicking brings about. When more than one action is possible for a file type, *Open* is usually the Default, but any of the possible actions can be made the Default. (See below). When a user invokes a particular file by double-clicking, the operating system consults the Registry and from the listed path for the Default action calls up the appropriate executable software file to carry out the desired action. For example, one particular program will be assigned or associated to *Open* (display) any hypertext document with the extension *htm*. In addition, a different program might be associated to *htm* files for an action denoted *Edit*. This action would show the actual HTML code rather than the compiled page and would allow changing the code. Thus, Internet Explorer or other browser (the "default" browser if you have more than one) would be used to *Open*, but Notepad or FrontPage or other HTML editor would be involved in *Edit*. Note that a choice of two or more different programs to do the same action is possible as long as different names are given to the choices. (See below).

In general, actions other than the Default are invoked from the right-click context menu. Right-clicking a file (once) will bring up a list of things (called the *context menu*). The top portion of the menu shows all the possible actions for the file, including the Default, which will be in boldface. An example is

shown in Figure 1. (More about Figure 1 later) A single left-click on one of these entries in the menu will bring about the action, including the Default if you choose. (Remember the click sequence, one from the right on the file icon or listing, then one from the left on a listed action within the context menu. People who have problems double-clicking can open files this way.)

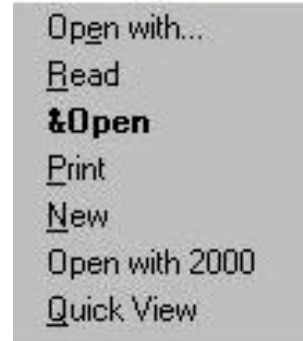


Figure 1

In some cases actions other than the Default can be called up in other ways. For example, Internet Explorer 5 allows for the designated HTML editor to be called up from within the menu of IE itself even though the Editor is a separate piece of software.

A list of all the file types registered on a particular computer together with their associated actions and software can be seen by going to **My Computer | View | Folder Options | File Types** (Figure 2). Registry fans can look in **HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT**. (Windows Me users will find an icon for **Folder Options** in Control Panel.)

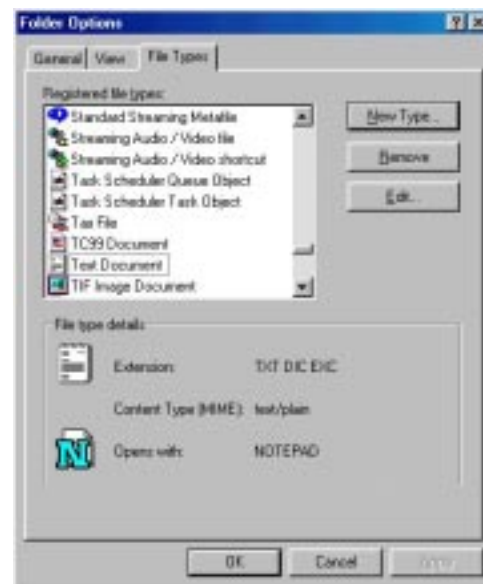


Figure 2

Adding and Changing Associations

Many of us have had the experience of installing some new software only to find that, without asking, the installation has changed our file associations so that some of our favorite programs no longer work. Knowing how to manage file associations will allow you to take control of your computer back. One way to manage file associations is through **My Computer | View | Folder Options | File Types** (Figure 2). Either double-click the file type of interest or highlight it and click the *Edit* button. The process is somewhat tedious and is described in many places including <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/win98/assoc.asp> and in my previous article "File Facts" at <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/98aug-c.pdf>. An easier way is to use the freeware *MenuEdit* from PC Magazine that I have mentioned previously in <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/jan2000.pdf>. It makes the process of managing associations quite straightforward. It can be downloaded at <http://hotfiles.zdnet.com/cgi-bin/textis/swlib/hotfiles/info.html?code=000OG4&b=pcm>. (I have used this program in both Windows 95 and 98 but I have not tried it in Windows Me.) You can also use another PC Magazine free utility, *Freedom of Association*, at <http://www.zdnet.com/downloads/stories/info/0,,000QXY,.html>. I find this one harder to use, however.

If you are only interested in an occasional use of a program to open a file or want a quick way to change the Default action, there is a simple procedure. Select (highlight) the file in question by left-clicking it once. Then right-click it while holding down the Shift key. This will bring up a context menu that now contains an entry, *Open with...* (See Figure 1). Left-clicking this entry will bring up a list of programs from which a selection can be made to open the file. (Figure 3). If the list does not contain the desired program there is a browse button *Other...* which will allow you to look for the appropriate executable from all the files on the computer. There is a box to check if you always want this program to be the default for opening the type of file in question.

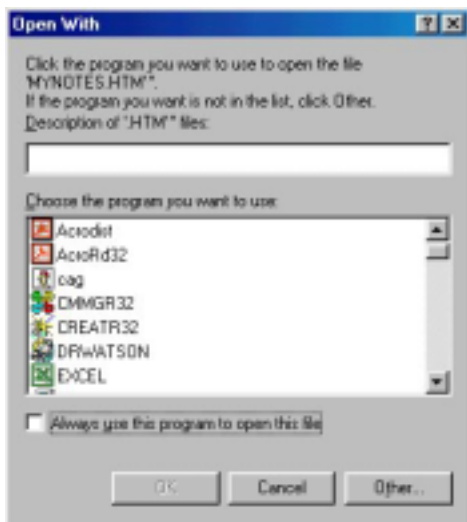


Figure 3

Sometimes it is convenient to have a choice of programs to open a file. For example, occasionally you may wish to open a .txt file in Word instead of in Notepad. Or you may have two Internet browsers and want to be able to use either to open .html files. You can use a program like PC Magazine's *MenuEdit* to set up different programs to do different actions or you can use the following procedure. Note that the actions do not have to actually be different. They just need to have different names. Go to **My Computer | View | Folder Options | File Types** (Figure 2). Scroll to the file type of interest and double click on it to bring up the **Edit File Type** window (Figure 4). There will usually be at least one action already listed, typically Open, maybe Print, etc. Click on the *New...* button. The **New Action** window will open (Figure 5) where you can type in a new command, like "Read" or "View" or anything whatever you may wish to call it. Then type in or browse to the application file, usually an .exe file, which you want to use to carry out the new action. The new action will now be added to the right-click menu. So, for example, you could *Open* a .txt file with Notepad, *View* it with Wordpad, and *Read* it with Microsoft Word, in all cases doing the same thing but with different programs. If you wish to keep track of what program is being invoked, you can use the name of the program in the description of the action. Thus for .jpg files you could name one action *Open with Internet Explorer* and name another *Open with Paint Shop Pro*, where the italics indicate the actions that will be listed in your right-click menu. Similarly, for .html files, you could have both *Open with Internet Explorer* and *Open with Netscape*. Any action can be made the Default by selecting it and clicking the *Set Default* button.



Figure 4

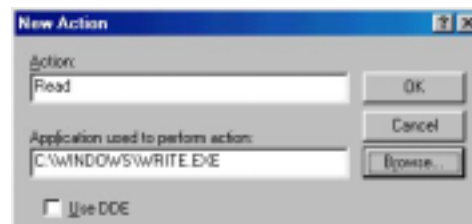


Figure 5

NEVER RETYPE something that's been typed before or....How to use Copy/Cut & Paste

by Coco Johnston - F1 Computer Users Cub

If you are new to computers, and you don't know how to move blocks of text or graphics from one document to another, or from one place in a document to another, you need to read on. The great thing about PCs is that you NEVER have to retype something that's already been typed.

When you get information (or a joke or story) in an email, and you want to send it to someone else without all those previous addresses attached to it, this is a solution to that problem. If you have a photo or picture in one place on your computer or a Web site, this trick will move it anywhere else (into a document or a new email message).

It's called CUT & PASTE or COPY & PASTE. The difference between cutting something and copying something is quite simple. CUT means to remove it from where it is. COPY means to leave the original where it is and make a copy of it for transport to another location. PASTE is what you do when you place it in a new location.

Four simple steps will move text (or graphics) from one place to another.

Highlight the text you want to move

Cut or Copy the highlighted text

Place the cursor in the new location where you want the text

Paste the text in its new location

There are four ways to copy & paste or cut & paste. All four do the same thing, but they were developed by people who are accustomed to using the computer in different ways.

Keyboard method (you never have to fight that mouse)

Highlight: with your cursor at the beginning of the text, hold down the Shift key, and tap the right arrow key until you have highlighted the text you want (you can also arrow back, up, and down to highlight in any direction)

To Copy: hold down the Control key and tap the letter C (called Ctrl + C)

To Cut: hold down the Control key and tap the letter X (called Ctrl + X)

Place your cursor where you want the text to appear (this may involve opening another document)

To Paste: hold down the Control key and tap the letter V (called Ctrl + V)

Quick recap:

Highlight: Shift + arrow

Copy: Ctrl + C; or Cut: Ctrl + X

Place cursor where you want the text to appear

Paste: Ctrl + V

Mouse method (you will never have to touch that keyboard)

Highlight: place cursor at the beginning of text; click and drag the mouse to highlight the text

Copy or Cut: right-click (a menu drops down) and left-click on your choice

Place cursor where you want the text

Paste: right-click (a menu drops down); left-click on Paste
Menu bar method (the menu bar is the line of words across the top of your screen)

Highlight: use either method above to highlight (to highlight the whole document, click Edit in your menu bar, and click Select All)

Copy or Cut: select Copy or Cut from the Edit menu in the menu bar at the top of the page

Place the cursor where you want the text to go

Paste: select Paste from the Edit menu

Icon method

Highlight: drag mouse or use Shift + arrows to highlight

To Copy: click on the Copy icon (2 pieces of paper) in your toolbar

To Cut: click Cut icon (scissors) in toolbar

Place your cursor where you want the text to go

To Paste: click on the Paste icon (clipboard) in your toolbar

When you cut or copy something, it is placed in a holding area called the "clipboard." You can't see the clipboard, but your data is there. It will stay there UNTIL you

1. copy or cut something else

2. turn off your computer

You can paste what's on your clipboard over and over, as long as you don't copy or cut something else on top of it. The clipboard that comes with Windows 95 will hold only one selected item at a time.

You can copy or cut and paste large blocks of text, graphics, all or part of the text of an email, text on a Web page, graphics on Web pages, tables, and just about anything else a computer has on it. There IS a limit to how much material the clipboard can hold, but if you exceed it, you can possibly do it in several steps.

There is NO reason that a forwarded email has to have hundreds of names and headers included with the message. The only reason I can think of for leaving the names on is to show where the message has been. With COPY & PASTE, you can send your friends ONLY the message and not the email addresses of everyone in the Universe. This also will help cut down on spam (junk email). (NOTE: you cannot CUT text from an email or a Web page; you can only HIGHLIGHT/COPY/PASTE.)

One last tip: if you want to move a small amount of text or a picture just a short distance within the document you are in, simply highlight it and click and drag it with you mouse. This works best when the phrase or picture is being moved only within the area you can see on your screen.

Credits:

Coco Johnston is the newsletter editor of The F1 Key, a publication of the F1 Computer Users' Club in Shell Knob, MO.

Minutes for the General Meeting January 8, 2001

By: Don Arrowsmith

The meeting opened at 7:55 PM. Paul reminded everyone that next month the meeting will be on the first Monday - February 5. He also asked for volunteers for duty at the PPCUG booth at the Trenton Computer Festival in May. There was also a last call for dues for 2001 from any that have not yet paid their \$30.

John Stroiney, Channel Marketing Rep. for Microsoft, gave the evening's presentation on Working with Digital Media using built-in features of Windows ME. He demonstrated Windows Image Acquisition by transferring pictures from a digital camera to a laptop computer.

Windows Tips continued from page 4

Figure 1 shows an example of multiple actions. It is part of the right-click context menu for a Microsoft Word .doc file on one of my systems where both Office 97 and Office 2000 are installed. The default action *Open* uses Word 97, *Read* uses Notepad, and *Open with 2000* uses Word 2000. Note that *Quick View* is also available. This can be added for any file type by checking the box *Enable Quick View* (Figure 4).

Unknown or New File Types

Files which have no extension or which have extensions that are not registered on your computer will need to have some program associated before they can be opened. Double-clicking on such files will automatically bring up the **Open with** menu (Figure 3) where you can pick a program from the list. If you do not know anything about the function of an unknown file, use Quick View or Notepad (WordPad for larger files) to see if it is a text or binary file and find any other information that would help to decide if and how it should be opened. References mentioned in the extensions article at <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/dec00.pdf> can help you find which software is needed for unknown file types.

Conclusion

There is no reason for the average PC user to be bullied by software that insists on messing with his or her computer settings or to be a slave to a particular browser or other application. Learn about file associations and take back control of your PC.



Also highlighted were Windows Media Player and Windows Movie Maker. He touched briefly on the system file protection and system restore features. After taking questions, he raffled off copies of Picture It and Windows ME. John made note of Microsoft's MindShare program for user groups. For details on how to get a 20% discount on MS Press titles see: <http://www.microsoft.com/mindshare/offers/mspress/>.

PRINCETON CHAPTERS OF THE ACM / IEEE COMPUTER SOCIETY PRINCETON MCAI / ITVA / MOVING IMAGE PROFESSIONALS OF CENTRAL JERSEY / PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER OF THE AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2001 JOINT MEETING

Streaming Web Video: Fact or Fantasy

Douglas Dixon and Jeffrey Esakov, Sarnoff Corp.
Thurs. Feb. 15, 2001, 8 PM

Streaming Web media is hot. Nielsen-NetRatings reports that thirty-six percent of all Web surfers accessed some form of streaming media in November 2000, a 65% growth rate over the previous year. And according to Microsoft, twice as many people listen to Internet radio than watch Monday Night Football.

So, is it time to jump into streaming media? How do you go about producing material and integrating it into your Web site? Yes, streaming Web media can be tremendously compelling, from catching the up-to-the minute election coverage on CNN.com to the popularity of shorts on sites like iFilm and AtomFilms. Yet it can also be confusing and frustrating to work with, with multiple competing and changing standards, and severe quality degradation due to bandwidth constraints. This talk will provide a roadmap for how to do streaming media, from video and audio production on the desktop to configuring servers for Web streaming. We will begin by describing the current state of the three major streaming formats — Apple QuickTime, RealNetworks RealMedia, and Microsoft Windows Media — and their associated compression algorithms. We will then review desktop tools for converting and producing your own streaming media files. Finally, we will discuss issues in hosting the different streaming formats on your Web site, and how to configure streaming servers, including for live broadcasts. We will also cover cost / performance issues in creating and hosting streaming media.

Date: Thursday, February 15, 2001, 8:00 PM
Location: Sarnoff Corp. Auditorium, 201
Washington Road,
Routes 1 and 571, Princeton, NJ

These meetings are open to the public. Students and their parents are welcome. There is no admission charge, and refreshments are served.



PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

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(Last Update: January 27, 2001)

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Consultants Corner

You can advertise your consulting business for \$25 per year in addition to your normal membership fee. The text space is your or your company's name plus five lines.





* For non renewing members,
this is your last newsletter!

Directions To Our Meeting:

The Lawrence Library is at the corner of Business Route 1 South and Darrah Lane.

From Princeton and North: Take US Route 1 South, past the Quaker Bridge / Mercer Shopping Centers. Continue on approximately 1 3/4 mile past I295 to the Route 1 split, stay to the right to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.

From Trenton and South: Take I295 North to US Route 1 South. Library is approximately 1 3/4 miles south of I295. Continue south to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.

For additional information visit <http://www.ppcug-nj.org>



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