

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

For Meeting Location, Date and Time, call 908-218-0778

Board meetings are open to All.

Board Members

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Paul Kurivchack 908-218-0778

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Secretary:

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Web Site

<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

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

April 8, 2002 - Add a Second Hard Drive to your System!

Paul Kurivchack will demonstrate how easy it is to install that second drive you desperately need.

May 4 & 5, 2002 - Trenton Computer Festival 2002

Help out at the PPCUG Parcel Pickup Area and See the show.

May 13, 2002 - Surge Elimimators - Zero Surge, Inc.

Rudy Harford and Peter Oesterwinter will present the latest in surge suppressors including a live demo with a 6000V surge generator. See the sparks fly!

June 10, 2002 - Upgrading to Windows XP

Vic Laurie & Paul Kurivchack will cover the ins and outs of upgrading to this OS.



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

Well we are just about through old man winter of 2002 without any major weather disasters affecting our meetings. Hopefully we will make it through our March meeting without a scratch and then onto the warm weather of spring. The reason I bring this up is the worrying I do for our winter meetings. We work hard to arrange speakers to present to our group and then at the last minute, the weather turns nasty, plane connections are missed or canceled, the traveling is very hazardous and we have no speaker or worst, a light turnout for the meeting. Knock wood, we are on a roll this year. Two months in a row, we have had great turnouts for our meetings. I want to thank all the members and guests for starting 2002 off to such a great start by attending our meetings.

Matt McCann of Quicken's User Group program did a great job presenting the features and benefits of using Quicken 2002 as a personal finance tool to our group last month. I have seen Matt present before and he is always a very entertaining guy who also knows all the ins and outs of Quicken. So hopefully all in attendance learned all they needed to know about Quicken 2002. I also want to thank the members and guests who took advantage of Matt's special pricing for Quicken 2002.

Remember, before you know it, May will be here and we will need your help in manning the PPCUG Parcel Pickup Area again this year at TCF 2002. Mark the dates of May 4 & 5 on your calendar. We need three to four for each days morning shift, but need five to seven for the afternoon especially until the close of the show each day. If you want to shop at the show, plan on doing it in the mornings and help your group out in the afternoon. The TCF parcel pickup area has become a major source of additional funds for our group. This allowed us to purchase the new LCD projector last year while keeping the dues fixed. I know how tough it is to give up a Saturday or Sunday to be with family, but it is only one day the PPCUG asks of you. Please let me have more help this year than I need.

See you all on March 11th.



Windows Tips: BootMe Up, Scotty

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

Most people probably do not pay a lot of attention to the process called “booting” that goes on when they first turn on their computer. However, there may come a time when it is necessary to get involved in the boot process in order to remedy some problem and to make use of something called a boot disk (or in the Microsoft version, a “startup” disk). You may go through life without ever having to use one, but like a spare tire for a car, a boot disk is something everyone should have. There are various versions of boot disk possible, but the basic contents are some form of operating system (normally DOS) that will allow you to run your computer from somewhere other than the hard drive. Although bootable CDs are becoming more common, most boot disks are diskettes for use in the A: drive. For a variety of reasons, I believe everyone should prepare a 3 ½” diskette with boot files and in this article I will suggest what I think should be included on it.

When you turn on your computer, it has to go through a whole series of steps before it ever gets around to loading your programs; it has to “pull itself up by its own bootstraps” (the origin of the term “boot”). Before the central processing unit (CPU) can access the keyboard, monitor, hard drive, or other basic components, the CPU has to get instructions from a small amount of permanently stored code called the BIOS (Basic Input/Output System). After the CPU has been instructed on how to get things in and out, the BIOS then tells the computer where to look for its next set of instructions. In most older machines the computer would first look in the A: drive and if nothing was there it would then look on the C: drive. (Just about everybody of a certain age has probably gotten one of those “Non-system Disk” messages when they forgot and left a diskette in the A: drive). Nowadays, the BIOS is often set up so that the CD drive is included in the boot sequence. The sequence may be first the CD drive, then the A: drive, and finally the C: drive or may be some other permutation of the order of the drives, depending on your system. Thus there is an option to run the computer from somewhere other than the C: drive in case that becomes necessary or desirable.

An example of such a situation is when you sit down at your computer, turn it on, the BIOS does its thing and then nothing more happens. Or perhaps you get some messages on a black-and-white screen to the effect that Windows is on strike and will not load. What now? Assuming that you have previously done all the steps that are supposed to be part of the routine maintenance that I keep preaching about, (<http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/Articles/basics.htm>) you may have a bad hard drive or perhaps a Registry that has gotten corrupted.

If your hard drive has gone defunct, you will be faced with obtaining a new one and reinstalling all your programs, files, and data. (You do back up, don't you?). A new hard drive is basically empty so the first thing that has to be done is to install the operating system. Get out your Microsoft Windows installation CD, if you have one, or the System Restore (or Recovery)

Disk provided by your computer manufacturer (often called the OEM or Original Equipment Manufacturer). Although a new hard drive will probably come already formatted, it will have no operating system so you are going to need a boot disk to reinstall your system. Whether you have to boot from the A: drive using a boot diskette or can use the CD drive to boot will depend on your setup. Full installation Windows XP CDs from Microsoft are bootable but to use the CD your BIOS must be set to include the CD drive in the boot sequence. Also some OEM restore disks may be bootable but many are not. The safest thing is to have a boot diskette with CD drivers prepared beforehand to be ready for this and other emergencies. Once you have booted from the A: drive (with CD-ROM support), the installation of the operating system can proceed in the usual way from your CD.

Another situation that may require a boot disk is when there is a corrupted Registry rather than a bad hard drive. In Windows 98 you may still be able to boot the C: drive into DOS and then restore the Registry from there. However, Windows Me has no pure DOS option (nor does XP but that is another topic) and a DOS boot disk will be needed to allow for a quick and easy Registry repair. There are other times when a boot disk is called for as well, which we cannot cover in this limited space, but the net conclusion is that everyone should have a boot disk available in case the need arises.

Making a Boot Disk for Windows 98

The various Windows systems provide for creating something called a “startup” disk which you may have made already or which may have come with your system. This disk can be made by going to **Control Panel | Add/Remove Programs | Startup Disk**. There is also a utility on many Windows 98 CDs located at *Tools\Mtsutil\Fat32ebd* (EBD for “emergency boot disk”) that allows for the creation of a startup disk. This particular version of a boot disk has its uses, and a copy should probably be made, but it employs a clunky, ponderous setup. It utilizes a RAM drive (probably shifting the normal letter assignment of your CD-ROM) and includes many extra drivers for completeness' sake. It is aimed more at reinstalling Windows than doing troubleshooting and I much prefer a version that is more streamlined.

To prepare a boot disk in Windows 98 systems, do a full format on a blank diskette and choose the option “Copy System Files” from the format menu. This will add the hidden boot files *Io.sys* and *Msdos.sys* and the DOS command interpreter *Command.com*. It will also add the hidden file *Drvspace.bin*, which you do not need unless you are using file compression. Next, add a DOS driver file for your CD drive. It will normally have CD in its name and a *.sys* extension. Try doing a file search using “*cd*.sys” (without quotes). If your CD drive has no DOS driver or you do not know how to find it, the generic file *Oakcdrom.sys* works for most CD drives. Try a search on your system for this file or copy it from the Windows “startup” disk.

Windows Tips continued on page 5

Click'N Design^{3d}

Software Review

By: Paul Kurivchack - PPCUG

Today the record-able medium of choice for archiving files of all types from your PC is the CD ROM. Almost all new PC's sold today come equipped with CD-R or CD-RW burners as standard including the software needed to burn those disks. But what do many of us do with the finished CD? We just take a black magic marker and hand write a cryptic name or number on the disk since the burning software doesn't include a labeling application. Six months later, you start to wonder what is really on the CD. So what do you do but go out and purchase one of the many CD labeling kits such as CD Stomper or the one I currently use, Professional CD/DVD Labels from Global Star Software (OfficeMax was selling them at \$19.95 with a instant in-store \$19.95 rebate). And while the Global Star software had some great backgrounds and clip art is was not so easy to use, but it worked. Also it worked only with Global Star labels so you are locked into purchasing directly from them when you ran out. You can't switch to Avery or other brands that may be much more readily available in your area. So what are your options? Use many of the many graphics programs available that support generic labels or look for a dedicated application that makes labels such as Click'N Design 3d.

Stomp Inc., just released Click'N Design 3d, a stand alone CD label design software package that gives you all the tools to create great looking labels for not only standard CD/DVD's but the mini CD's, Video Tape, and even floppy disks. Now for many of you that have been using CD Stomper and it label creator, which is also from Stomp Inc., Click'N Design moves you up a notch in the creativity area with many more features such as:

- > 3D Text and Texture Mapping
- > On the fly Circular Text Creation (WYSIWYG)
- > Pre-Made CD Designs Templates
- > 5000 Plus Photo and Clipart Library with Browser
- > Works with all brands of Labels (Including Global Star)
- > TWAIN 32 support for scanners and digital cameras
- > And much more . . .

Getting Started

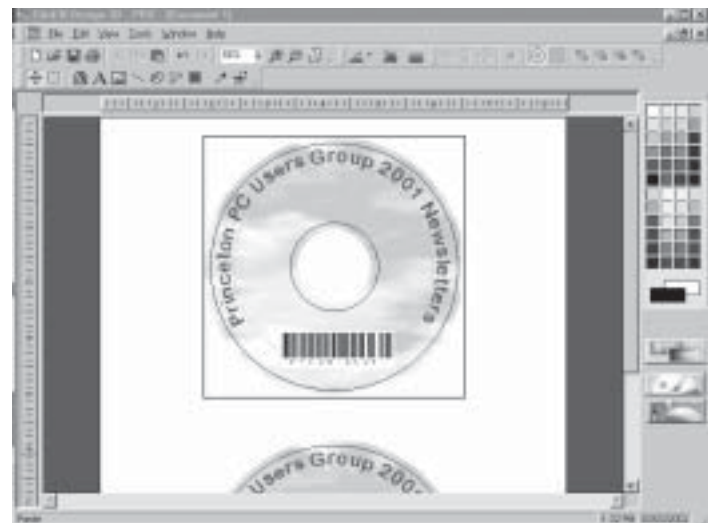
Installing Click'N Design is a snap. It runs on any Pentium 166 MHz or better PC with Windows 9X and above OS. 64 MB RAM and 30 MB of hard drive space for the basic application without clipart library (Run off the CD for Clipart) and all other standard general mouse and video specs. After the short install, just simply click on the desktop icon or through the normal Start/Programs menu to launch Click'N Design.

Creating the first CD Label

Launching Click'N Design brings up a pop up window where you select the Label Stock style (CD labels from every manufacturer imaginable are listed). Once a style is selected the main design screen appears and as default the Quick Designer win-

dow pops up on top. Now for dedicated graphics people like me, the Quick Designer was at first glance a "let me create my own label, go away" type thought. But as I worked my way through the product, I found that the Quick Designer is a great starting place to create the perfect label. For starters everything within Click'N Design is WYSIWYG. The Quick Designer has four sliders for selecting the Layout, Background, Color Scheme and Font Scheme. Click the layout to select the design you like. Then change from the default background and color or font schemes to any of the pre-selected schemes. Watch all of this changing before your eyes. Once you settle on a selection, hit the Transfer button to move the design to the main design screen. Once back on the main screen you can start to modify the 3D text and add your personalize information. All of this can be accomplished in a matter of minutes and you will have one great looking CD label.

Now for the creative types out there, bypass the Quick Designer and just go to a blank label. All of the tools required are right in front on the main toolbar. Circular text, straight text, normal drawing tools, import backgrounds, 3D text and finally, barcodes. Color selection is a separate toolbar on the right side of the design window, see example 1.



Example 1

I started out with a blank CD label, added a "Cloud" background (Any BMP/JPG, etc., image can be used), using the import Clipart/Image tool. I then selected the Circular Text tool to add my title information, example 2. The circular text tool is quite powerful allowing you to select the font type and color,



Example 2

the start angle (where the text starts on the circumference of the label), size and whether the text will be concave or convex. Just start typing the text in the window and watch the text scroll around the edge of the label. Is the text too big? Select a smaller size. If the colors are wrong, simply bring up the color palate to

Click'N Design continued on page 6

(Obtaining this file may be your best reason for making a “startup” disk as well as the boot disk we are describing.) Next add these files to the diskette

Attrib.exe
Deltree.exe
Edit.com
Extract.exe
Fdisk.exe
Format.com
Himem.sys
Mscdex.exe
Scandisk.exe
Scanreg.exe
Smartdrv.exe
Sys.com
Xcopy.exe
Xcopy32.exe
Xcopy32.mod

These files should all be available on your hard drive in the folder `\Windows\Command\`, or if not there, in `\Windows\` or `\Windows\System\`. One way to find them is to do a Find File search and then copy them to the diskette from the search window. Exactly which files are included in a boot disk is to some extent a matter of choice. Other files can be added to suit the user’s preference. The details of the functions of each of these files cannot be discussed in the space available here but more information can be found in the comprehensive discussions given by Fred Langa at <http://content.techweb.com/winmag/columns/explorer/1999/1025.htm> and in the references at the end of this article. . Since I am including two files that are not included in many boot disk discussions, I will briefly mention that *Extract.exe* allows retrieval of files from within the Microsoft compressed format CAB, so that fresh copies of system files can be obtained. *Scanreg.exe* allows the restoration of backup copies of the Registry and certain types of Registry repair.

The boot disk is still incomplete until two files that the user must create are added. This step may cause the average user to feel unnecessary trepidation but the process is very simple and involves only a few lines of text in Notepad. The two files provide for memory management and support for your CD drive and are called *Config.sys* and *Autoexec.bat*. Although the file extensions are not (and must not be) that of a text file, the files are in fact straightforward text files. The versions I am going to suggest here are not tweaked for the extra bit of efficiency in memory use that some prefer (upper and high memory) since in this article I am trying to keep it as simple as possible. (You can read more about these files at <http://content.techweb.com/winmag/columns/explorer/1999/1011.htm>)

Use Notepad to create a file with the lines

```
Device=himem.sys  
Device= oakcdrom.sys /D:MSCD001
```

Save the file as “Config.sys” making sure that Notepad doesn’t

tack on an extra .txt extension at the end of the filename. I have used *oakcdrom.sys* for the CD driver. If you are using your own driver, substitute accordingly. Be sure to include the switch `/D:MSCD001` (with a space between it and the driver file).

Use Notepad to create another file with the lines

```
mscdex.exe /D:MSCD001  
smartdrv.exe
```

Save as “Autoexec.bat”, again making sure that Notepad doesn’t tack on an extra .txt extension at the end of the filename. (Note that in either file the entries are case-insensitive so caps are optional.)

Test your boot disk by putting it in the A: drive and turning on the computer. Check to see if your CD drive is working by placing a CD in the drive, entering the appropriate drive letter (with colon) and entering “dir” (no quotes). You should then get a list of the CD contents. Then put the diskette away in a safe place and hope that you never have to use it.

Disks for Windows Me and XP

For whatever reason, Microsoft removed from Windows Me the ability to format a diskette with system files. A “startup” disk can still be prepared as in Windows 98 but obtaining a boot disk as described above is more roundabout. If you have access to a Windows 98 system, simply use a disk prepared in Windows 98. It works just fine for Windows Me. Ignore the message “Starting Windows 98” that you always get. You are starting DOS, not Windows of any kind when you use the boot disk. Some Windows Me systems may have the folder `C:\Windows\command\ebd` installed. In that case format a diskette and then copy the files *io.sys* and *command.com* to the diskette. Note that *io.sys* should be marked as a hidden file. The diskette will then be bootable but the list of files given above will still have to be added.

In Windows XP Microsoft changed its mind and it is again possible to format a diskette with DOS system files. However, if your system uses the NTFS file system, a DOS disk cannot access the hard drive. To make a boot disk for NTFS volumes see <http://support.microsoft.com/directory/article.asp?ID=KB:EN-US:Q311073>

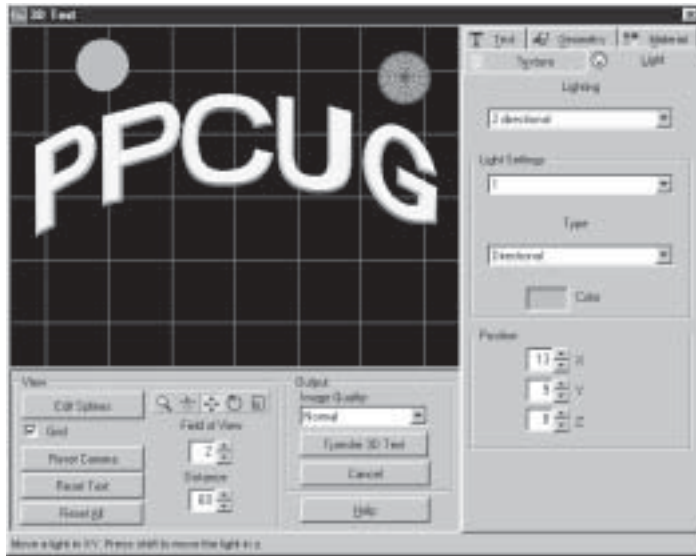
<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us:Q314079>

There is also a description of how to download contents for a set of six diskettes that will allow the installation of Windows XP if your CD is not bootable. See the article at

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q310994>. None of these NTFS disks provide the kind of troubleshooting available in the DOS disk discussed for Windows 98/ Me but are aimed at installing the operating system. I haven’t tried it but a boot disk providing access to NTFS volumes is described at <http://ramtck.tripod.com/ubd/indexen.html>. Also, there is a piece of software called NTFSDOS that allows reading NTFS volumes from DOS. For more details see <http://www.sysinternals.com/ntw2k/freeware/NTFSDOS.shtml>

change the color. Most functions are toggled "On or Off". One feature I really like is the ability to add multiple lines of circular text. Just grab the text and drag it up or down to position it on the label, all of this done in WYSIWYG mode. I then added a Barcode to the label using the barcode editing window to finish off the label. Now that the first label has been created, go to the Edit menu and select Clone to copy all the contents of the label to then paste onto the next blank label that would be printed on the page. This makes it quite cool and easy to use.

Now the most powerful tool of all is the 3D text tool, example 3. This pop up window starts with a view window and a number-



Example 3

of selection Tabs for adding the text, changing the Texture, Material, Geometry and lighting along with a number of control buttons. Again since all actions are performed in real time, you can see exactly what the change will look like before transferring to the actual label. Here is where you can experiment with the Extrusion or Bevel of the text on the Geometry Tab. Change the color gradient and add multiple repeats using the Texture Tab or the material type such as Chrome, Rubber, Plastic and much more on the Material Tab. Even with all the experimenting, if the results are not what you were expecting, simply hit the Reset Text or Reset All buttons to start all over. If you like what was created, hit the Transfer 3D Text to the label button. Once back on the label, position and resize the 3D text to fit properly.

One last feature that is rarely talked about is printing. As I have a Xerox Docuprint C11 ink jet printer, it has its own idiosyncrasies in printing CD labels. I was able to calibrate my printer using the Calibrate Printer Wizard to adjust the starting position for the type labels I use. Click'N Design provides the necessary tools to produce the best looking labels.

Conclusion

While the emphasis is on CD labels, Click'N Design can be used to make videotape labels, floppy labels, CD Jewel Case la-

els and even letter size posters. It is really a very powerful graphics package that can and should be used anytime dynamic text is needed. Click'N Design 3d is a very easy to use, inexpensive (Download for \$14.95 or on CD for \$19.95 plus shipping) application for anyone who needs great looking CD's and Jewel Cases. If you are in the market for a fun application, check it out.

Visit <http://www.stompinc.com> for additional information.

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For the somewhat pricey (\$249) NTFSDOS Professional for reading and writing see <http://www.winternals.com/products/repairandrecovery/ntfsdospro.asp>

Additional References

If you prefer, you can skip all the work of creating your own boot disk and download the contents for one from the references given below. However, that will mean accepting whatever selection of files they offer. Versions of boot disk for the different kinds of Windows are available at:

- <http://www.user-friendly.net/download/download.htm>
- <http://www.bootdisk.com/>
- <http://www.answersthatwork.com/>
- <http://www.startdisk.com/Web2/ubd/ubd.htm>

Fred Langa has extensive discussion and instructions for boot disks at:

- <http://content.techweb.com/winmag/columns/explorer/1999/1025.htm>
- <http://content.techweb.com/winmag/columns/explorer/2000/15.htm>
- <http://content.techweb.com/winmag/columns/explorer/2000/16.htm>
- <http://www.langa.com/newsletters/2001/2001-12-06.htm#2>
- <http://www.langa.com/newsletters/2001/2001-12-10.htm#2>

More discussion is at

<http://www.lurkhere.com/boot768.html>

If you like bootable CDs here's a comprehensive site

<http://www.nu2.nu/bootcd/>





PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

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(Last Update: March 3, 2002)

Send Updates to kurivchp@optonline.net for inclusion in this listing.



Important!

If the Library is closing due to bad weather the auto-attendant attached to the 609-882-9246 number is changed to give patrons information about the Library closing.

Consultants Corner

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E-mail: jda-ir@njcc.com

Consultants Corner

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Minutes for the General Meeting

February 11, 2002

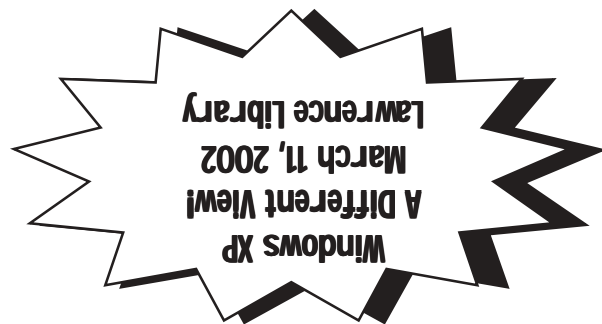
By: Don Arrowsmith

Paul started the meeting at 7:47 PM by taking questions from the floor. Topics included an intermittent frozen mouse pointer, uninstalling Windows 98 and using an external mouse with a laptop.

At 8:00 Matt McCann, Intuit representative, began demonstrating Quicken 2002. It was a very thorough presentation that used a large sample financial file to illustrate many aspects of the program.

At the conclusion, he offered very attractive prices for purchasing the product. One copy each of Quicken Deluxe and Quicken Suite were raffled to those members who were present.

The meeting concluded at 9:10.



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