Tuesday June 12, 2001
A Joint Meeting of Princeton Macintosh Users’ Group & PPCUG

Streaming Web Media on Your Desktop
Douglas Dixon, Sarnoff Corporation

Doug will explain what streaming media is all about and what’s happening with it on the Web. He will talk discuss the three major streaming formats - RealNetworks RealMedia, and Microsoft Windows Media and Apple QuickTime. He will also discuss and show how to make your own streaming media files.

At
Princeton University
Jadwin Hall, A-10 Auditorium, Washington Road, Princeton, NJ.

This is a one time special event with all future regular PPCUG meetings returning to the Lawrence Library on the second Monday of the month!

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TCF2001 - PPCUG’s parcel pickup area getting ready for a busy weekend. The Saturday crew from (L to R), Paul Kuriwchack, Laxman Phadke, Tom Carman, Marsha Duggins and Ed Weiss. Missing from photo is Bud Lewis.
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.

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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

June 11, 2001 - Linux SIG at Lawrence Library (Monday)
July 9, 2001 - Comcast Cable Internet Services
August 13, 2001 - Upgrade Your PC - Continued!
Tom Canavan & Paul Kurivchack will continue the upgrading process from May’s general meeting.
September 10, 2001 - Geneology - John Konvalinka

Presidents Message
by Paul Kurivchack

We will all be experiencing a first in the history of the Princeton PC Users Group by holding a joint meeting with the Princeton Mac Users Group for our June meeting. For many years, it was PC vs. MAC or vice versa with very little room in the middle. I for one never could truly understand what the big deal was. I started out with a MAC 128K machine way back in 84’ and even though I now use a PC prominently, I could easily use a MAC to write this Presidents message or create the newsletter and no one would know the difference. And yes, the world would be extremely dull if all we only had one computer platform, it would be the same as if we only had one make or color automobile. Difference help create innovation and change, something we may not always want but truly need. That is why I hope as many of our members attend the June 12th meeting at PMUG as possible to see that yes, there are differences but also many similarities between the platforms and that personal computers are just another tool to use for work and entertainment.

I want to thank our members who took the time out of their busy schedule to help this year at TCF. Thanks goes to Bud Lewis (supplied the tent), Tom Carman, Ed Weiss, Marsha Duggins, Laxman Phadke & Son, Don Arrowsmith and Kim Goldenberg. Without their help, the parcel pickup area would not have been as successful as it was. Donations were a little lower that in years past with a total of $356.42 being collected. Add in the 108 bottle of water and cans of soda we sold at one dollar and the very generous donation by Ken Gordon of KGP, Inc., of $250.00, it brought our total up very close to $700.00. This was the best year ever. I also sent Ken a thank you letter and would like to share an excerpt from it with our members:

“We truly appreciate the recognition given by KGP Productions for the service our group provides to TCF’s customers in running the parcel pickup area. Hopefully, our service enhances the customers TCF experience knowing that they have a place to drop off that special purchase without putting an early end to their shopping day. Again this year, many customers from years past left their purchases with us knowing that their items were safe while in our care.”

Lastly, with the added money from KGP, Inc., we are proceeding with the purchase of a new LCD projector. We determined based on our needs, budget and performance that we will purchase the Polaroid PV-338LCD XGA projector demonstrated by Rick Skinner of Digital Arts & graphics at the May meeting. We should have it in use for our July meeting. No more squinting to see the screen.

See you all at the June meeting.
April 9 was my lucky day. After Paul Kurivchack’s informative show and tell on TechSmith’s “SnagIt” screen capture software there was a raffle of some TechSmith goodies – including a copy of Camtasia, TechSmith’s high-powered software for creating videos of on screen activity. It had not been taken by the time my nametag was pulled, so I grabbed it!

Why? Well, I do a lot of work in PowerPoint and often want to demonstrate to a group the “look and feel” of surfing the web and stepping/scrolling through a succession of pages on a particular site – without all the potential headaches of going “live” to the “World Wide Wait”. Granted, there are other ways of doing this, by successive capture of screen stills (using TechSmith’s SnagIt, for instance – see Paul’s review in the May 2001 PPCUG News.)

But Camtasia goes beyond that: its forte is that it is a video recording program that records all of the movements and actions that occur on your computer screen for a defined time – including mouse movements and data entry — to show others exactly what steps you took or, for a training video, what steps they should take to produce a particular result. It does this by capturing the action from the Windows desktop and saves it to standard .AVI movie, Microsoft, or RealNetworks streaming video formats.

Camtasia is really three products in one:
1. Camtasia Recorder, which works like a VCR in many ways including “stop”, “pause” and “record” functions;
2. Camtasia Producer, a video editor which helps you clean up and arrange your screen capture clips in any way you choose; and
3. Dubit, an audio editor for creating a sound track for your video.

1. Camtasia Recorder:

The Recorder captures screen activity and applies real-time effects. You simply start the capturing at any point (using the above screen which sits side by side on your desktop with the screens you are capturing,) pause it at will, and stop it when you are finished. (The “start” “pause” and “stop” operations can even be accomplished with hotkeys.) Longer productions will normally consist of many video clips captured by the Recorder then edited and assembled with the Producer. To preserve the sharpness of the screen image, most recording takes place at a 1:1 scale — the video will be exactly the same size (in pixels) as the screen capture frame. For many applications a rate of 3-5 frames per second is sufficient and will produce smaller files and lower streaming rates.

Also, to reduce the size of the resulting .AVI file, the user has the option of capturing the whole screen, or just the relevant parts.

Camtasia Recorder Feature Summary:
- Capture any portion of the screen
- Select a capture frame rate or record in time-lapse or stop-frame mode
- Zoom or pan the capture frame around the screen
- Add special effects for mouse clicks or cursor movement
- Record real-time narration from the microphone
- Add timestamps and text captions to the video

TechSmith Screen Capture Codec:

Camtasia includes the TechSmith Screen Capture Codec that offers “exceptional” compression speed at all color depths. Unlike “lossy” compression techniques, such as MPEG-4 that trade off image clarity for higher compression ratios, TechSmith says it wanted to create standard .AVI files that preserved image quality and offered superior compression. TechSmith feels they accomplished this by developing a Screen Capture Codec (TSCC). This codec, which can be freely distributed with your videos, is included with Camtasia. It provides “uncompromised” (lossless) image quality coupled with “excellent” compression ratios for typical applications. TechSmith claims that any video player that conforms to the Microsoft Video for Windows specifications for codecs can display a video using the TSCC codec. This includes Windows Media Player, RealPlayer G2 and all other AVI players they tested.
2. Camtasia Producer:

Camtasia Producer allows you to edit your AVI video clips to produce a longer, professional presentation. The Producer uses a simple storyboard metaphor to help you easily create a movie from many clips. You can browse and select your clips with the Producer's File Explorer-style thumbnail browser. Next, review, cut and trim your clips in the Producer's editor. Then select and arrange your clips on the storyboard. “Smoothly” flow from one clip to another by selecting from over 70 transition effects.

TechSmith's objective in creating The Producer was not to add to the host of video editors available for Windows at almost every price, but to offer an easy-to-use editor optimized for the specific needs of the target audience of Camtasia: developers of documentation and desktop-based presentations.

When you are satisfied with the video and audio clips, the storyboard layout and the transition effects, the final target video can be generated as a standard AVI, Microsoft Advanced Streaming Format or RealNetworks RealMedia format. The Producer offers default values to get the new user up and running, and provides a Production Wizard for extensive control over generation options. For AVI and ASF files, the Producer defaults to the TSCC video codec, but allows selection of any available video and audio codec that supports recording as well as playback.

**Camtasia Producer Function Summary**
- Uses an Explorer-style thumbnail browser and a simple storyboard metaphor
- Maintains project information to rebuild video productions
- Review, cut and join AVI clips
- Choose from 78 transition effects
- Select color depth, frame rates, video and audio codecs
- Publishes to standard AVI, Microsoft Advanced Streaming format and RealNetworks RealMedia format

3. DubIt Audio Editor:

DubIt is a separate program from TechSmith that provides you an easy way to add voice overs and narrations to any standard AVI file. It is included with the purchase of Camtasia. DubIt contains many features besides audio editing, including a slide show maker.

In some cases, such as short, simple videos, simultaneous narration of the clip while capturing the screen with the Recorder is sufficient. For more involved productions, assembling the clips into a finished visual should precede the narration phase. DubIt (and a microphone) are used to lay down a voice track while viewing the video. DubIt can also trim and attach WAV audio files to video clips.

Camtasia is a high-powered, “industrial strength” program, and I’m still just getting my feet wet with it. What I have found so far is that it is very effective for creating AVI files of on screen Internet surfing activity. These AVI files are then easily incorporated into a MS PowerPoint presentation, and give the audience the “look and feel” of live surfing of The Web – often in a more effective and directed fashion than even the live surfing would be.

Camtasia is shareware; its list price of $149.95 includes a 30-day free trial. System Requirements: Microsoft Windows 95, 98, 2000, or NT 4.0, Windows Media Tools, sound card.

For more information, consult TechSmith's WebSite: [http://www.techsmith.com/default.asp](http://www.techsmith.com/default.asp)

And see product reviews by:
- Luisa Simone March 2, 2000 PC Magazine [http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/stories/reviews/0,6755,2454489,00.html](http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/stories/reviews/0,6755,2454489,00.html)
My Adventures with DSL
By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

I am going to depart from writing about Windows to describe my experience with installing and using Digital Subscriber Line (DSL or to be more technically precise, ADSL, where A means asynchronous). This will be a purely personal saga with no attempt at covering most of the technical detail. Nonetheless, I hope my experience will be of some use to those who might be contemplating whether to install DSL.

As the Internet makes heavier use of fancy graphics and multimedia, broadband access is becoming increasingly of interest. Also, a lot of software seems to be growing and growing so that downloads of 10 Mbytes and more are common. For example, some of Microsoft's patches and upgrades are no longer feasible on a 56k modem dial-up unless you are prepared to take hours for a download. For these reasons and the simple desire to do things faster, I decided about a year and a half ago to upgrade my Internet service. A number of my acquaintances in this area had broadband Internet service through cable access, either with Comcast or @Home. They seemed quite happy with the results and Bell Atlantic (soon to become Verizon) had not yet provided DSL in Princeton where I live. (For those unfamiliar with DSL, it is a way to obtain broadband Internet service over ordinary copper-wire telephone lines.) So I decided to get a cable Internet connection. I was astonished to discover, however, that the Princeton cable provider RCN had not yet seen fit to prepare for the modern world. RCN hadn't (and as far as I know still hasn't) provided for two-way communication on its cable system. Here in one of the scientific centers of the world, RCN was still using the antediluvian system that requires a telephone link for the upload side of the connection. Further, they had no real plan to upgrade in the foreseeable future.

Thus, I abandoned any notion of using cable and decided to wait for Verizon to bring DSL to Princeton. Their maintenance trucks had been blocking traffic all over town for years so I assumed they must be rewiring the whole place. I signed up to be notified whenever service did become available and was assured it would be soon. There were other companies who provide DSL service but since they all would have to use Verizon's lines anyway, I saw no point in complicating things by involving two different companies. Also, many of these third-party providers have been going broke, something that seemed unlikely to happen to Verizon. (I should point out that DSL is only possible if your telephone is within roughly 5 miles or so from a station but that was not a problem where I live.).

As I waited for the arrival of the dawn of my new era in Internet service, I began to read about DSL service in various places and the news was not good. There were numerous horror stories of outages, bad service, inept personnel, and general incompetence. Verizon figured in many of these accounts. I began to get cold feet and wonder if maybe 56k would just have to do. So when Verizon notified me that DSL had finally come to Princeton, I hesitated. I was not reassured when I heard from a family friend in New Hampshire that the Verizon technician there had trashed her computer while he was trying to install DSL service. I decided to let the matter rest while I spent this past winter traveling.

On my return I found an offer from Verizon of an installation kit including network card, modem, and DSL filters. The filters keep the high-frequency DSL signal out of any conventional equipment that you wish to use on the same line. It is possible to use a regular telephone or modem at the same time as the DSL. For example, my wife could be on line to her dial-up AOL account at the same time I was using DSL or I could make a telephone call while I was on the Web. The kit was free if I did the installation myself and signed up for a year. (I don't know if this offer still exists.) Since I had no intention of letting any Verizon technician come anywhere near my computer, the self-installation part was no problem. Having to sign up for a year was mitigated by a 30-day period during which I could cancel without charge. Despite the continuing barrage of problem stories appearing on the Web, I decided to go for it, figuring that the 30 day grace period would give me enough time to either get the kinks out or to call the whole thing off. I called the special Verizon number and signed up. I was given a date four weeks later when the DSL service would be turned on from the central office and I was told that the installation kit would arrive in a few days. The next day I received e-mail confirmations of the date when service would be available and of the shipping of the installation kit. In three more days I had the kit with network card, modem, DSL filters, software, and instructions. The network card was plugged into a PCI slot and my Windows 98SE system had no problem recognizing the card. (The biggest problem was getting a recalcitrant computer cover off and back on but that is another story having nothing to do with DSL or Verizon). There were half a dozen DSL filters, more than I needed and I put them wherever they were needed (before the telephone, before the dial-up modem, etc.) The instructions that came with the kit gave the configurations of the network protocols and clients that had to be made (you have to add VPN, for example) but said to wait to configure until service was turned on. Also the software package that came was to be installed after service was available. The DSL external "modem" box seemed to work and to communicate with the network card (no input yet, of course). So far, so good. Now I had to wait for the service date.

A week or so before the scheduled date, I received another e-mail reminding me of the scheduled date and time. Finally, the big day arrived and at 6:10 PM (the scheduled time was 6 PM) I looked to see if the modem had input. No luck, so I tried again at 6:30. This time all systems seemed to be ready. Having configured the network protocols and clients according to instructions, I began the software installation. At this point I should say something about the nature of the software. Increasingly, DSL services are using what is known as PPPoE (Point-to-Point Protocol over Ethernet)
Unfortunately, the Verizon setup disk also insists on installing the Netscape browser. There is no choice, no option. I was not happy about this since I have become a confirmed Internet Explorer user. I knew that Netscape was going to change all my settings, including e-mail, but I figured that I would just go back and redo them. I had burned a Norton Ghost image of my system to CDs and copied the Registry to a safe place so I was ready to install. The setup began well enough with WinPoet going in first but right after Netscape was installed and some configuration of the connection started up, Netscape began repeatedly crashing my Win 98 SE system. Uttering a few oaths about the dubious ancestry of whoever designed the installation dusk, I called up the Verizon 24-hour help line. (It was about 8 PM). I was put on hold. While waiting, I managed to stabilize my computer by getting rid of Netscape and reverting to Internet Explorer. I also was able to figure out how to use WinPoet and got the connection configured by manually entering things like my User ID, the e-mail POP and STMP servers, etc. The procedure was done exactly the same way as for a dial-up through Internet Explorer and Outlook Express settings. The account information was provided on a Web page from Verizon during the setup, which I fortunately managed to catch. Presumably, if Netscape had not messed up the installation, the configuration would have been done automatically (but using Netscape, of course). After I pretty much had things running, I finally got through to Verizon (about 30 minutes waiting on hold). I explained that Netscape had been crashing. I was told to remove it (I already had. Why was it installed in the first place?). I thanked the tech and hung up. Having learned my lesson, I set up a connection on another computer with nary a problem. The secret? I didn’t use Verizon’s installation procedure. I installed WinPoet by it-
# PPCUG Member E-mail Directory

Send Updates to kurivchack_p@compuserve.com for inclusion in this listing
Include full name along with e-mail address.

## TCF2001 PPCUG Parcel Pickup Area

Digital Photos by Bud Lewis-PPCUG

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(Last Update: May 30, 2001)
Directions for the Joint meeting of PPCUG at PMUG

Princeton University, Jadwin Hall, A-10 Auditorium, Washington Road, Princeton, NJ. Park next to the building in Lot 15 and walk upstairs. Once inside, you are on the first floor. Turn left and go to elevators. Take elevator to A level, turn left and follow signs to room A10 (auditorium).

For maps go to:
http://www.pmug-nj.org
http://www.ppcug-nj.org