

PPCUG

NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

Monday August 12, 2002

Creating Movies with your Computer

Joel May

Joel will demonstrate the process of creating digital video (image capture, editing, and output) using Pinnacle Studio 7.

Among the subjects covered will be editing scenes, inserting transitions, adding sound tracks and creating titles.

He will also discuss the hardware and software requirements for digital video production.

At

Lawrence Library

Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

US Route 1 South & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, NJ

☆☆

*Meetings of an organization at any of the facilities of the Mercer County Library System
in No Way implies endorsement of its programs*

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Vic Laurie (left) and Sol Libes setting up for Vic's presentation on upgrading to Windows XP at the July General Meeting.

Digital Photo by: Tom Carman



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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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

September 9, 2002 - Doug Dixon on DVD's!

Doug will discuss the technology behind DVD burning.

October 21, 2002 - Adobe Systems (Third Monday!!)

Kiyo Toma will make a presentation on PhotoShop Elements and Acrobat

November 18, 2002 - To Be Announced (Third Monday!!)

December 9, 2002 - Holiday Party & Elections



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

Well it is that time of year that I start the crusade to find current members who want to help our group out by becoming board members. This year it will be more critical than ever as I intend to step down as President at the end of the year. I have enjoyed the seven years I have spent as president and will still attend meetings and contribute to the group in the future, but it is time to change the guard and bring in new blood.

One of the major reasons for this decision are with the change of my job duties and my tech support group being outsourced to IBM Global Services. I no longer have the freedom to provide the necessary hours to the PPCUG during the week that as President I would like to or should. Therefore at the July board meeting we discussed the following measures for the 2003-year.

1. Find a member who wants to take on the Presidents role at the current 12 meeting schedule. (I will stay on as Newsletter Editor until the new president finds a replacement).
2. Find a member who wants to take on the Presidents role at a reduce 6 meeting schedule (Meetings every other month). To reduce the programming requirements and time required. (I will stay on as Newsletter Editor until the new president finds a replacement).
3. If we are unable to find a new President, the PPCUG will be put into hiatus for 2003 with the current board members meeting in July 2003 to decide if there is enough interest in starting back up in January 2004 or formulating a plan of disposing of all group assets and shutting down the PPCUG permanently.

I know that these seem like tough measures but the time has come for me to move on to other adventures.

In other news, those who attended the July meeting were treated again to an excellent presentation by Vic Laurie on upgrading to Windows XP. Check out the meeting minutes for the link to Vic's web site where his presentation is located for download. Also check out Vic's "Time for Change" article and provide any feedback you can to help Vic out in writing future articles for the PPCUG News.

See you all on August 12th.



Dual-Booting Windows 98/Me with Windows

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

As I have previously discussed (<http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/Articles/xp.htm>) a good choice for those who wish to add Windows XP to an existing system is dual-booting. Windows XP is incompatible with a variety of older programs and hardware. By using a dual-boot system, the functionality of these legacy applications and equipment can be preserved until the time comes for a new computer or a complete system overhaul. Dual-booting with XP is basically very straightforward but there are a few points that are worth pointing out and I will mention them here. Additional detail is available at <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q306559>

It is not a good idea to install XP on the same partition with another operating system. A second empty partition should be created first. Although partitioning can be done from the XP disk using the modern version of Fdisk, everything on existing partitions will be destroyed. Unless you are going to completely reinstall your older operating system you will need something like Partition Magic 7. If using Partition Magic, create a data partition and do not use the option "this partition will contain an operating system" unless you plan to use a boot manager other than the one that comes with XP and you want to hide the two operating systems from each other. Hiding one operating system from the other was necessary when dual-booting Windows 95 with 98 or dual-booting Windows 98 with Me. It is not necessary with XP and my personal preference is to be able to see the entire system from each operating system. Windows XP can also be hidden from the Windows 98 system by formatting the XP partition with NTFS. More advanced users may prefer this setup but I prefer to use FAT32 with both operating systems. Windows 98/Me must have a FAT partition. (For more on file systems see <http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/Articles/filesystems.htm>)

The older operating system must be already installed before starting the XP installation. Installation is very easy with only one thing that has to be carefully watched. Do NOT use the default choice of an upgrade installation. Ignore the message that this is "recommended". This choice will over-write the older existing Windows operating system. Choose "New installation, advanced." (Figure 1) The installation will then go in automatically onto the empty partition. If you have more than two partitions, there is an Advanced setting that will allow you to pick which partition you want XP to be on.

Figure 1. Choosing correct installation



After XP is installed, a boot menu will appear whenever the

computer is first turned on. By default Windows XP will be at the top and will be the operating system that boots unless Windows 98/Me (called Windows on the menu) is highlighted by using the down arrow key. The default setting has a 30 second delay period in which to make a choice. Both the order of operating systems in the boot menu and the delay time are controlled in a hidden file *boot.ini* that is located in the root of the C: drive. It is a text file and can be edited with a text editor (after removing the attributes) but it is a better idea to do any editing from Windows XP. To adjust settings go to **Control Panel-System-Advanced-Startup and Recovery- Default Operating System** (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Configuring *boot.ini*



One final point is that the early stages of booting XP actually involve the C: drive even when most of the operating system is on another partition. XP installs three files in the root of the C: partition. These files are hidden, read-only, system files and include the aforementioned *boot.ini*, and two others, *ntldr*, and *ntdetect.com*. On a previous Win 98/Me system, *bootsec.dos* is also installed. If these files get corrupted, the system will not boot so I suggest making a backup diskette with copies. There is also some Microsoft-speak that might be confusing. Redmond would refer to the C: partition where booting is initiated as the "system" partition or volume. The partition where most of the XP system files are located they call the "boot" partition. It is enough to give you a headache.

Windows XP: As Good as it Gets *Bass discovers few crashes, great performance, and a minimum of headaches with XP Pro*

By: Steve Bass - Pasadena IBM Users Group

Kvetching about an operating system is therapeutic. Believe me, I've done lots, saving regular visits to my shrink. But my complaining has almost bottomed out since I made the full-time switch to Windows XP Pro.

You caught that, right? I said almost. The reason is that even though I'm wildly pleased with XP, there are still a few features—and loose ends—I don't like. I'll describe a few of them in this and subsequent columns, and show you how XP has built-in ways to make the changes. (Of course, that's one of my primary kvetches — finding the spots to modify XP isn't obvious and requires digging.)

To play fair, I have to warn you that I'll also do some proselytizing. I'm going to do my best to win you over, so to speak, for your own good. That's because once you get over the hassle of Product Activation, and Microsoft's annoying single license policy, I really think your computing experience will increase substantially.

I need another soapbox minute or two. Many of the PC World letters I receive complain, sometime bitterly, of a Microsoft conspiracy to force you into upgrading your system. Readers go on to say that in order to use XP, they'll need to replace some of their devices (printers seem to be the first one not to work), or stop using old, 16-bit programs written for Win 95.

I'll concede and agree with many of the readers that Microsoft should have done a better job with previous Windows versions, then we wouldn't be stuck in the corner having to upgrade.

But the reality is that if you want a slick operating system, one that's likely to make your computing day smoother and your workday more productive, you'll have to upgrade. [Set Soapbox to Off].

No More Stinkin' Crashes

You probably know that XP is a pretty interface hung on Windows 2000's architecture, so it resists crashes extraordinarily well. That's true for XP but not necessarily for programs that still plow headfirst into the bit bucket. For instance, Eudora, my e-mail program, locks up when I try embedding what it considers a too large image into a message. And Internet Explorer also has a way of choking and freezing on some sites, doing its best to imitate a deer in headlights.

With Win 9x, the Eudora and IE crash could bring the system down; even if it didn't, I'd reboot to clear out any leftover holes in memory. Win XP contains the crash and stops it from contaminating the rest of the system. Using Control - Alt - Delete, the three-finger, soft-boot salute, calls up Task manager, one of XP's shining lights. Click on the toasted app and it's history.

Crash Reports? No, Thanks

Of course, with Microsoft at the helm, nothing as cool as Task Manager's handling of a crash can be left alone. Microsoft insists on meddling by sending itself the details of the crash. No doubt, the crash report does provide clues, often vital ones that you can review, to explain why a program crashes.

But once I've looked at a report — say, Eudora's paige32.dll

bug that Qualcomm won't fix — I'm no longer interested in seeing it pop up. So I've turned parts of the feature off. (From Start, Control Panel, Advanced tab, Error Reporting.) This dialog gives me choices, and they're good ones. I can get the report but not send it, opt to hear only about programs or XP's errors, or even add specific programs to watch.

Zap, You're Restored

GoBack was the first successful utility to save snapshots of a PC's hard drive and let you restore the drive to a time when things were running well. It shouldn't surprise you to see a similar feature in Windows XP. (Roxio's GoBack, \$40, download at www.roxio.com.)

Quick aside: Many of Microsoft's niftier features are from the brain trusts of third-party companies. Woody, creator of dozens of Office, and specifically Word add-ons, said that to me in a private e-mail recently. More in another column.

XP's System Restore does just about everything does, just not as well. Nonetheless, it's an improvement over the way it worked in Windows ME, and a handy tool. I create a Restore point just before installing a new application. If the installation goes kablooey, I use System Restore to jump five minutes into the past and get my system going again.

I use it so often, I pinned it onto my Start Menu for easy access. Try it: Find System Restore in All Programs, Accessories, System Tools and right mouse click on the icon and choose Pin on Start menu. Easy, no?

System Restore's Problems

The problem? System Restore isn't perfect. While I haven't had a problem in the 25 times I've used it, some reports on the Internet talk about DLLs that should be gone after a System Restore, are still on the system.

One thing Microsoft doesn't tell you is that each Restore Point (and system checkpoints, those restore points XP does automatically) takes up disk space.

You can dump all but the last system point by using XP's Disk Cleanup tool. Open Disk Cleanup, by clicking Start, choose All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, select Disk Cleanup, and choose the More Options tab. (Shortcut: From Start, Run, type cleanmgr.)

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Check PCW's current edition at www.pcworld.com/resource/toc/index.asp and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at www.pcworld.com/bass_letter.

Consultants Corner

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(Last Update: August 3, 2002)

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

Minutes for the General Meeting

July 8, 2002

By: Paul Kurivchack

Paul opened the general meeting with remarks about the upcoming meetings. He wanted to note to the members that the Library instituted a new policy of making announcements over the public address system starting at 8:30 pm alerting its customers that the library is closing at 9:00 pm. Paul fielded questions from the floor and greeted the visitors to our meeting.

At 8:00 pm, Vic Laurie kicked off his presentation on upgrading your PC to Windows XP. Vic covered quite a bit of ground from hardware requirements to issues with old legacy applications in his power point presentation. The full presentation can be downloaded from Vic's web site: <http://www.vlaur.com> under the XP section. Vic also provided the group with a great list of Windows XP reference sites to visit if and when you are ready to take the plunge to WinXP.

The meeting ended at 9:20 pm. There were a total of 41 members and guests in attendance.

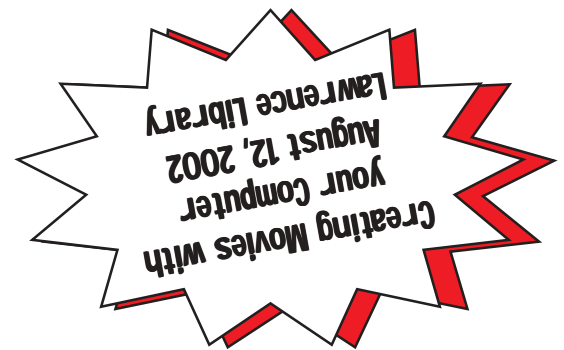
Time for a Change

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

“The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on.”

This well known line from Edward FitzGerald's translation of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is appropriate to the series of articles that have appeared here. In the computer world, nothing stays the same for long and this monthly column is no exception. When I began writing these pieces, Windows 95 was the new operating system in use and the Internet had not yet had its explosive growth into the omnipresent phenomenon of today. Nowadays the Windows 9X/Me operating system is being supplanted by XP and for many people the primary application is the Internet. Thus the time has come to change the focus of these articles from Windows 9X/Me tips to topics appropriate for XP systems and the far greater use of the Internet.

In addition to giving tips for better every-day use of the home PC, I have also tried to write articles that educate and explain how things work. In the limited space available, a lot of detail is not possible and I urge you to make use of the Internet references that I give. It is my belief that, while it is not necessary to be a technical whiz, some basic knowledge will greatly enhance the ability of the average PC user to make efficient and effective use of the computer as a tool and valuable resource. Perhaps that attitude and the subjects that I choose only reflect my own background so I need to have feedback from the readers on what your interests and needs are. Your comments and suggestions are welcome so please write me at hampsi@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from you.



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