



Meeting Preview

Lotus SmartSuite for the New Millennium

ATTEND THE SEPTEMBER 1 General Meeting of the Danbury Area Computer Society to discover an alternative in the Office Suite market with a vision toward the twenty-first century. IBM's Lotus SmartSuite Millennium Edition is Year 2000 compliant and ready to provide you with better value than its competitors and a superior way to work the Web.

SmartSuite Millennium Edition prepares you for a new era in computing. It contains eight innovative applications: the Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet app., the new FastSite intranet publisher, Organizer time and contact manager, Word Pro word processor, Freelance Graphics presentation graphics, Approach database, ScreenCam multimedia software, SmartCenter Internet information manager, and integrated speech recognition from IBM's ViaVoice.

Encounter the newest member of SmartSuite, the Lotus FastSite Intranet document publisher. FastSite makes Internet/intranet publishing fast and easy. Designed for desktop application users, it automatically converts groups of existing SmartSuite or Microsoft Office files to Web formats.

Rather talk than type? With integrated IBM ViaVoice speech recognition software, the choice is

yours. Use ViaVoice to dictate directly into a Word Pro document, or enter data into a 1-2-3 spreadsheet and turn your work into fun.

Then there's Lotus 1-2-3, the spreadsheet that revolutionized the business world—and is doing it again. It's all there with the latest features such as Web Tables, which lets you incorporate live Web-based data into your spreadsheets.

SmartSuite fits right into your complicated computing environment. It efficiently shares data with Lotus eSuite, the most popular desktop applications like Microsoft Office, and integrates with enterprise databases and applications including Oracle, SAP, PeopleSoft, Lotus Notes, and Domino.

The DACS general meetings, held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Danbury Hospital auditorium, 24 Hospital Avenue, are free to the public. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. with casual networking. At 7 p.m. join Random Access, a moderated question and answer period during which members share their computer problems. This is followed by Surfin' Safari, a brief business meeting, and the main presentation at 8 p.m. For more information about DACS and its SIGs (Special Interest Groups that meet throughout the month to discuss specific topics) see <http://www.dacs.org>.

Meeting Review

Let Quarterdeck Do the Dirty Work CleanSweep and Partition-It diagnose, fix, and tidy up.

by Jack Corcoran

TIS INDEED a vicious cycle. Disk makers give us more storage capacity, and software makers fill it up, then disk makers give us even more storage capacity, so software makers ... You get the picture. And we, the users, pig out—save everything, download everything, add everything.

There comes a day of atonement, however, which starts when we finally admit to ourselves that we have

created Mega Monster, with Giga Monster lurking in the wings. At some point we even admit that we cannot delete anything because we don't remember what all that stuff is, rationalizing that even though we don't remember what it is, someday we might need it. And always, in our minds, is Microsoft's dire threat: "Don't fool around with the Registry." Since we haven't the

Quarterdeck *Continued on page 4*

President's File

SEPTEMBER is always a time of renewal, as students begin a new school year, car manufacturers sport their new lines, and DACS warms up its SIGs and sets out its new programs for the coming season. This year we are reinvigorating our New-to Computing series for our beginning users, lining up presenters for our monthly meetings, and making connections with other computer groups and with the greater Danbury community.

New to ...

As this newsletter goes to mailboxes, DACS was scheduled to hold its first New-to program of the season on August 26 at the Danbury Library, with Ed Heere expounding on the relative merits of upgrading or buying a new PC. If you decide to go the upgrade route, on September 23 Wally David will help you decide whether to include a new operating system, with a demonstration of the ins and outs of Windows 98. On October 23, in a special program at the WCSU Ansell School of Business, we will explore the Year 2000 question with a panel of experts; and on November 16 our own chief medical officer, Jeff Setaro, will discuss the latest in PC viruses.

Any suggestions for more New-to programs? Tell me about them at the general meetings, or send your ideas to dacsprez@aol.com.

Western Connection

The Y2K program in October will mark a new milestone for this user group. DACS and Western Connecticut State University are exploring ways our organizations can work together to provide new computing

services for our members and students, and for the greater Danbury Community as well. It is hoped that this relationship will help to extend DACS membership to WCSU students and faculty, and open University facilities for use by our group. In addition, we hope to attract more participation in DACS activities by area businesses and their employees. Look to this column for more information in coming months.

Access ACSS

The Association of Computer Support Specialists is a community, both "on-line" and "off-line," that seeks to promote recognition of computer support as a profession, and to help members advance through education and personal contacts. Its members include help-desk specialists, computer repair technicians, network engineers, network and database administrators, computer instructors, technical writers, software and hardware testers, and programmers (if they support the code they write). ACSS welcomes independent consultants, full-timers, part-timers, and permanent employees, as well as contractors. It also welcomes recruiters and others who offer valuable services to computer support specialists. ACSS offers professional training programs in operating systems, IS management, and Web page design at prices well below those at private training centers. Some of these programs are held at AMSYS Computer in Ridgefield.

ACSS President Howard Rothman, a longtime DACS member, is familiar with the quality of our membership and our programs; and many in our society have joined his association to take advantage of training opportunities. Now, under a recent agreement with DACS, ACSS will waive its \$100 membership fee for DACS members who sign up for courses. That means that anyone choosing to sign up for an ACSS training course will in effect have the option of free DACS membership and a \$75 cash rebate, to boot. In return, ACSS will advertise its programs in *dacs.doc* for half the usual rate. (See ad, page 5) This compact will give ACSS exposure to more than 600 active computer users in our area, and provide DACS members with a vital outlet for technical training and networking. It's truly a win-win situation for both organizations.

For more information, be sure to visit the ACSS Web site at www.acss.org.

—ALLAN OSTERGREN
dacsprez@aol.com

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DACS, its officers and directors assume no liability for damages arising out of the publication or non-publication of any article, advertisement or any other item in this newsletter.

The editors welcome submissions from Dacs members. Contact Frances Owles, at 860-868-0077 (jones@ct1.nai.net) or Allan Ostergren at 860-210-0047 (dacseditor@aol.com). Advertisers, please contact Brad Altland 203-357-4007 (brad.altland@gccapital.com)

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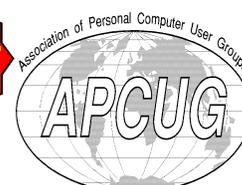
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Applications & Hardware to enhance *dacs.doc* are always welcome.



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Resource Center: (203) 748-4330

Web Site: <http://www.dacs.org>

HelpLine

Volunteers have offered to field member questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours indicated below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; evening means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are calling. HelpLine is a free service. If you are asked to pay for help or are solicited for sales, please contact the *dacs.doc* editor; the person requesting payment will be deleted from the listing. Can we add your name to the volunteer listing?

d = day e = evening

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
AOL	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(e)
AutoCAD	Peter Hylenski	(203) 797-1042	(e)
C/UNIX/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430	(d e)
C + +	Reg Charney	(914) 833-0762	(d e)
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COBOL	Charles Godfrey	(203) 775-3543	(e)
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DOS	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(e)
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Hardware	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(e)
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Magic PC	Hira Suri	(203) 748-2473	(d e)
Microsoft Access	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
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R:BASE	Jerry Frieárich	(203) 740-7175	(e)
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Viruses	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	(d)
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Windows 3.1	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)
	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
WordPerfect	John Heckman	(203) 831-0442	(e)

Directors' Notes

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on August 10, 1998, at 7:30 p.m. Present were Messrs. Bovaird, Buoy, Cohen, Gingras, Heere, McIntyre, Ostergren, Setaro, and Mrs. Owles. Also present were Don Ruffell, and Marlene Gaberel. President Allan Ostergren presided in the absence of the Chairman, Wally David. Secretary Larry Buoy recorded the minutes.

Finance and membership

The minutes of the July 13 meeting were approved. Treasurer Charles Bovaird reported combined checking and postal account balances of \$10,949.53 and postage of \$111.68, a total of \$11,061.21, and current membership of 603.

Supplemental server

In a discussion about DACS' use of a supplemental server to the Library's server, Frances Owles reported that her potential source of a donated server had come to naught but that she would remain alert for other sources. Ed Heere repeated his offer to let us use the Amsys server, noting the probable disadvantage of the commercial domain name but the possibility of a link for archival material to relieve overload on the Library's server. Jeff Setaro mentioned that the database project for community continuing education sources might be accommodated on Jim Scheef's own server. It was agreed that no action be considered unless a capacity problem materializes with our current equipment.

Web site restrictions

The board discussed restricting access to parts of DACS' Web site, and ways to achieve this were proposed. It was decided that at this time any restriction to the site would be either counterproductive to the goals of DACS or logistically impractical.

HelpLine Update

Larry Buoy presented an updated draft for the DACS HelpLine. It was agreed that the HelpLine be revised to include those currently on the list who agreed to continue providing advice and to cull categories no longer active and advisors who did not respond to Larry's phone survey within a reasonable amount of time. It was also agreed that we try to update the list more

Directors' Notes Continued on page 4

Quarterdeck *Continued from page 1*

foggiest about the Registry, we figure we better not fool around with anything. The day of atonement culminates when we finally cry out to the world that we need HELP.

Ta Da !!!

Help came riding into our August General Meeting in the person of Gary Ulaner, Group Product Manager of Quarterdeck Corp., bringing what he proudly called HelpWare.: CleanSweep zaps those unneeded files and tidies up that chaotic file structure, Partition-It straightens up that mess of a disk, and Select-It lets you run multiple operating systems.

Gary did not claim to be Zorro (even though there is a faint resemblance), but he left the audience feeling that help really is out there.

Quarterdeck is a Silicon Valley software company that has been around for sixteen years specializing in software utilities. It is also known locally as the company that acquired Inset Systems for its main product, Hi-Jaak, and whisked it out to California. Inset, of course, was located in Brookfield and frequently active with DACS. Many DACS members were Hi-Jaak beta testers and served on Inset focus groups. Quarterdeck subsequently divested itself of Hi-Jaak and now concentrates on software to help users cope.

Gary was among the best of the product presenters we've had at DACS meetings. He had a utilitarian product rather

than a glamour package to sell, so he had to be good. His presentation was relaxed and friendly, but also polished and professional. He mixed useful tutorial tidbits about file structures and operating systems with his product features. He ran a one-man show, but his well-polished product demonstrations ran flawlessly and he never had to stop talking. We all gained useful general information as well as insight into just what the products could do for us. His presentation lasted just one hour, and he held the attention of the audience to the very end. Questions popped up throughout, and he handled them cleanly and thoroughly.

CleanSweep

The first half of Gary's presentation covered CleanSweep. He demonstrated how it provides an install/uninstall capability much more extensive and effective than the one provided by the operating system, particularly with respect to the .DLLs.

CleanSweep maintains an application knowledge base of the user's system. A built-in Wizard monitors downloaded shareware, provides application updates from the Quarterdeck Web page, and manages the backup and archiving chores as well.

Other CleanSweep features include cleanup of cache, Internet cookies, and other disposable system files. It also provides a Registry Genie for sorting out those Registry problems that so befuddle us mere mortals.

CleanSweep goes where no user dares to go. And it does good things for us without jeopardizing any of our treasures.

Partition-It

The second half of Gary's presentation covered Partition-It, which restructures your hard drive to better utilize storage space. It replaces the FDISK function that comes with the operating system and manages partitions and cluster size to provide greater storage efficiency. Gary accompanied the product description with very useful mini-tutorials about the principles of disk organization, cluster sizes, and partitions.

With Partition-It, Quarterdeck bundles Select-It, a tool for running multiple operating systems on the same PC. It allows you to switch between Windows 3.1, Windows 95, Windows NT, MS-DOS, UNIX, and others.

• • •

Quarterdeck, in a class act, donated ten copies of the demonstrated products to our end-of-meeting raffle and provided special user-group order sheets for CleanSweep and Partition-It, offering them for \$20 each as well as good prices for other Quarterdeck products. The offer expires September 4, 1998, which limits the opportunity to members who attended the meeting and those they told about it.

JACK CORCORAN is a retired computer programmer who needs HELP.

Directors' Notes *Continued from page 3*

frequently and expand it as new topics requiring assistance materialize. It was also suggested that the preliminary statement for the HelpLine's use be redone to emphasize the time considerations of those offering their expertise.

Associate members

A proposal to offer complimentary memberships to writers of dacs.doc articles living beyond our local area was discussed. It was decided that these individuals be granted an Associate Membership (basically an electronic membership) and be mailed only those issues of dacs.doc in which their articles appear.

New to ... programs

Alternative venues for meetings were proposed. It was felt that the Resource Center could be more fully utilized. The content of PR releases was also discussed.

WCSU link

President Ostergren announced he had recently met with the Dean of the Ansell School of Business about jointly beneficial programs and assistance, including DACS' use of Ansell facilities, group memberships for Western Connecticut State University students, and DACS' advice and assistance in designing an MIS program. A joint meeting between Ansell faculty members and an ad hoc committee from DACS to pursue the possibilities of such cooperation was suggested.

Corporate sponsorship

The concept of corporate sponsorship of DACS through advertising in the newsletter was considered. It was agreed that advertisers contracting for no less than 2/9 of a page for a period of no less than six consecutive issues be considered corporate sponsors for the period of the con-

tract only. Corporate sponsors would be listed in *dacs.doc*, and their corporate Web sites linked to dacs.org. Other benefits are to be determined.

The next meeting of the Board, normally falling on Labor Day, was postponed to the following Monday, September 14, 1998.

— LARRY BUOY

E-MAIL NOTICE

65% of our paying members have reported valid email addresses to us.

Meeting notices are sent to these members via email the week before the general meeting.

If you have an email address and do not get these notices, send an email message to aam@eci.com saying you would like to receive these timely notices.

Windows / NT Certification Prep Course in CT

ACSS Low-Cost Week-End Course Emphasizes Hands-On Instructor-Led Environment

- WHY?:** Many good-paying jobs in computer-support these days require Microsoft Certified System Engineer status. Getting the time, money, and experience to take the necessary prep courses, and then passing the exams can be an overwhelming challenge for many computer-support specialists. However, the ACSS makes the task less of a burden on your time, by offering the preparation course for the certification exams in the evening, at a pace you can sustain (one 3-hour session per week), and at a price you can afford!
- WHY ACSS?:** The ACSS course, **priced at \$1250**, is being offered for about 1/3 the rate of most of the commercially available Microsoft Windows/NT Product Specialist courses. Naturally, the course *is for members only*, but joining is easy.
- FOR WHOM?:** You should be a current user of Microsoft Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, and use applications that run under Windows, such as Microsoft Office, WordPerfect, Lotus SmartSuite, etc.
- WHEN?:** The Windows/NT prep course will be offered in 30 weekly sessions, on Saturday mornings, starting September 12, 1998. Class-times will be 9:00 AM to Noon.
- WHERE?:** **The course will be offered at AMSYS Computer**, which is located at 900 Ethan Allen Hwy. in Ridgefield, CT.
- BY WHOM?:** The instruction is by the ACSS instructor staff, all of whom are Certified by Microsoft in the material they teach, and who are experienced instructors. Up to 12 students are accepted per class, and they must be ACSS members.
- WHAT?:** Course materials are the Microsoft Windows/NT Technical & Administrative Training Kits for MCSE, Networking Essentials and Enterprise Networking. They include workbooks, copies of Windows NT-software, and tutorial software. They cover all material you need to pass the Windows/NT MCSE *required* exams. You will still need to pass exams in 2 *electives* of your choice to receive the MCSE, and we offer those later. Very importantly, you also get your own 2 Gig swappable hard-drive, to install NT on and to use in class or at home. You pay \$200 for it, and can sell it back or keep it, at the end of the class.
- WHICH?** *A small selection of the course topics covered includes the following:*

The Microsoft Certification Process	Intro. to Sample Tests, and, Scheduling your Windows/NT Exams
Using The Windows/NT Training Kit	Installing Windows NT: Windows Components, INI files, PIF files
Windows-NT in Networks & Network Basics	Windows/NT System Architecture vs. Windows 95
Access-Control: Security, Permissions, ID	Workgroups and Domains, Domain Models
Hardware Requirements & Installation	Support for Protocols: NETBEUI, IPX/SPX, TCP/IP
Sharing Files, Printers & Other Peripherals	Migrating from & Connecting to Novell Netware
Local & Network Log-ons	System Maintenance: Backups/Restores, Updating Users & Drivers
Troubleshooting: The Registry, Backup/Restore	Boot Disks, Repair Disks, Error Event Viewer
Optimization: Virtual Memory, Multi-Tasking	Performance Monitoring, Memory Pools, Contingency Planning
Designing Network Topology	Estimating Server Resource and Cabling Requirements
Installing Applications Software	Planning Expansion: Adding/Removing Workstations & Peripherals
Remotely Accessing Networks	Studying Sample Exams & Getting Hands-On Troubleshooting <i>Practice!</i>

Association of Computer Support Specialists

218 Huntington Road Bridgeport CT 06608

Voice (CT): (203)332-1524 FAX: (203)333-6436 Voice (NYC): (212)875-7761

To Enroll in the Course, fill out the form below, and send it to the letterhead address.

ACSS or DACS Members: Include a \$625 deposit. **Non-Members:** Include a \$625 deposit & \$100 Membership Fee.
Everyone: The balance = \$625, and is due at first class plus \$500 for Training Kit and Swappable Hard-Drive fees.

Your Name: _____

Company or Business Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____ E-Mail: _____

Phones: _____ (Biz Voice): _____ (Biz FAX): _____ (Home): _____

Windows 98

Upgrade 98 with Care

by John Heckman

I READ Richard Corzo's account of installing Windows 98 with increasing apprehension (see "Windows 98: Another view of Microsoft's latest OS," August 1998). I think a few words of caution are in order if you are *upgrading* to Win 98 instead of installing it fresh. Corzo installed Win 98 on a separate logical drive, avoiding some of the problems that have been reported in the computer press. But anyone who is installing over an existing Win 95 setup should be aware of a number of issues.

First, leading laptop makers, including Dell, IBM, Gateway, and Compaq, have advised users *against* upgrading until new BIOS are available. You could be faced with a machine that simply doesn't work.

Second, these same manufacturers have advised *against* using the Win 98 automatic update feature, since you never know exactly what you are getting.

Third, if you are running older programs, it is entirely likely that they will not work under Win 98 until you get updates, new drivers, etc. If you plan to upgrade, you should check with the manufacturer of all your programs for updates, new drivers, etc. beforehand.

The basic reason for a lot of the problems with the upgrade is that Win 98 ruthlessly overwrites any .dll or driver that was installed by other programs (including some of Microsoft's own programs), regardless of whether it is older or newer than

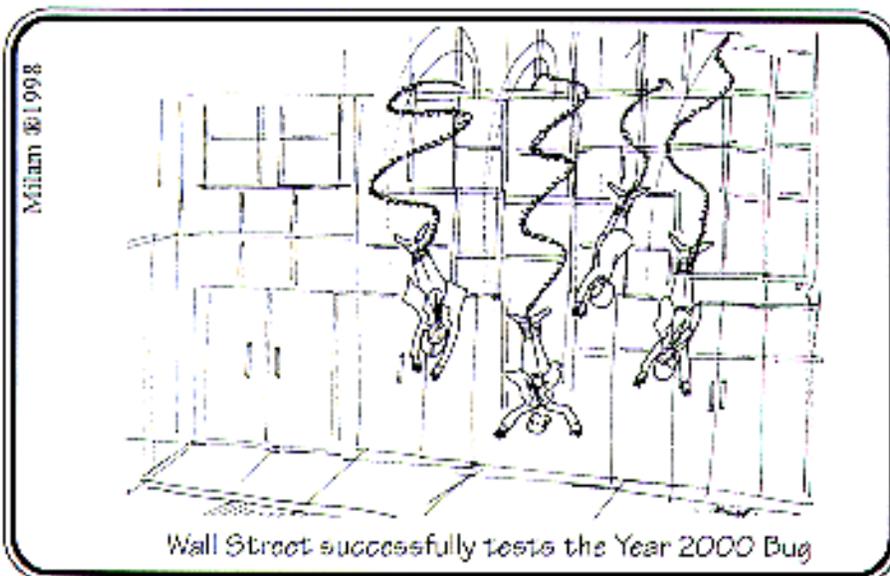
the version being installed. According to Microsoft, this is to provide a "known, working baseline operating system." So Windows is guaranteed to work, even if none of your programs do! A little like the cheap computer ads for which monitors are an added extra.

Brian Livingston, author of the "Windows Secrets" books, has documented how to track what is being replaced through the Version Control Manager. The VCM can be found under Start/ Programs/ Accessories/ System Tools/ System Information/ Tools/ Version Conflict Manager. If different versions have been installed, your original file or files will have been moved to C:\windows\VCM.

A utility from Barry Press lets you see whether any of your applications are dependent on particular .dlls. You can download this from <http://www.aros.net/~press>.

The computer trade press has been replete with horror stories about upgrading to Win 98, so I would advise especially those with older PCs to proceed with extreme caution. If you do want to upgrade to what columnist Stephen Manes refers to as "\$90 worth of duct tape," consider adding more memory and setting aside the better part of a weekend.

JOHN HECKMAN is president of Heckman Consulting, specializing in the legal industry. He has taught Optimizing Computer Use for Small Business at Norwalk Community Technical College.



Local Area Internet Providers

AT&T WORLDNET	800-967-5363
CLOUD 9	914-682-0384
CONCENTRIC NETWORKS	800-745-2747
C. P. CONNECT	203-734-6600
DELPHI INTERNET	800-695-4005
EARTHLINK	800-395-8425
MAGS-NET	203-207-5695
EROL'S	888-463-7657
GTE INTERNETWORKING	800-927-3000
IBM/ADVANTIS	800-888-4103
INTERNET84	203-830-2122
INTERRAMP/PSI	800-827-7482
LOCALNET OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY	203-425-3535
MCI	800-550-0927
MICROSOFT NETWORK	800-386-5550
NETAXIS	203-969-0618
NETCOM	800-353-6600
NORTH AMERICAN	800-952-INET
NETMEG INTERNET	888-863-8634
ON THE NET	203-270-6388
PARADIGM	800-664-INET
PUTNAM INTERNET	914-225-3234
SMART WORLD TECH.	203-790-4600
SNET INTERNET	800-408-8282
SPRYNET	800-SPRYNET
TIAC	203-323-5957
WEB CONNECT OF RIDGEFIELD	203-438-7650
WEBQUILL INT. SVCS	203-750-1000

List for informational purposes only, not an endorsement of any service.

Further information?

Call Jim Finch @ 203 790-3654

DACS NewMembers

07/22/1998 thru 08/16/1998

- 1) Howard Bashant
- 2) Roger L. Busch
- 3) Wayne C. Karns
- 4) John T. / Florence Maloney
- 5) Hugh McKeown
- 6) Laurie Vrba

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on
your mailing label reads

EXP 07/1998

you need to renew your
DACS membership—NOW!

Win98 Extras

Microsoft Plus! 98

by Richard Corzo

AS THERE WAS for Windows 95, there is a Plus! pack for Windows 98. It's a grab bag of games, utilities, and enhancements for Windows 98.

Windows 98 itself includes nearly all the features of the original Microsoft Plus! for Windows 95, including the original set of desktop themes. If you get bored with the original themes, Windows 98 includes two or three new ones, but Plus! 98 adds eighteen more desktop themes, many in high color (that is, using a 65,536-color palette). The subjects range from Architecture to World Traveler and include comics-based themes such as Doonesbury, Garfield, and Peanuts. Unlike the previous themes, those that come with Plus! 98 include a customized icon for the new My Documents system folder on the Windows 98 desktop. You can also request that the theme be changed automatically each month (or more often if you change the schedule setting in the Task Scheduler).

Name that tune

Apart from the new themes, the feature that initially most interested me was the Deluxe CD Player. The CD player program that comes with Windows 95 and Windows 98 allows you to enter manually the artist's name, album title, and track titles. However, the Deluxe CD Player saves you from such drudgery by connecting to the Internet and downloading the information when a new audio CD is inserted into your CD-ROM drive.

The program can download the information from one of two sources: Music Boulevard or Tunes.com. It's fun to play Stump the Internet, although so far I've found only one of my CDs that completely stumped both sources. If this happens, you can enter the information manually and then upload it for someone else's

benefit. These features can also be found in shareware programs such as CDValet, but the Deluxe CD Player also has menu links to the Internet for more information on the artist or on the musical genre(s)



under which the currently playing CD is classified. You have a choice of a full-size program window that looks like a car stereo component, a much more compact version, or just an icon in the system tray that you can right-click to get all the menu choices.

Games a'plenty

The games consist of Microsoft Golf 1998 Lite, Lose Your Marbles, and Spider Solitaire.

The golf game is a pretty realistic simulation of golf. You can choose weather and ground conditions, and an unseen partner will give you commentary on your game, including help on your next stroke. The Lite version has only nine holes, but it should give you an idea of whether you might like to get the full-fledged Microsoft Golf 1998.

Lose Your Marbles will appeal to the younger set. It's a fast-paced game, slightly reminiscent of Tetris, in which you have five columns of marbles that you try to eliminate faster than they accumulate. To eliminate marbles you have to line up at least three marbles of the same color in a row.

The most addicting game for me is the Spider Solitaire. It's nearly impossible to win a game. You start out with two packs of cards in ten columns with the top card of each pile face up. You can move a card, or set of cards of the same suit, on top of a card one higher in value. To eliminate cards you must accumulate all the cards

of one suit from King to Ace in one column. Good luck!

Photo edit

Another "lite" version of a full-fledged program is Picture It! Express, which lets you do simple editing of photographs that you or someone has scanned into the computer.

Utilities

In the utilities category is a version of McAfee VirusScan that is good for six months of upgrades and updates. For further updates you will need to purchase a license from Network Associates or go out and buy another antivirus program. I didn't try this program myself since I already have another, but it is known to be a worthy antivirus program.

The File Cleaner is an enhancement to the Disk Cleanup utility in Windows 98 that will look for some additional files to clean up. The Start Menu Cleaner performs the rather small function of removing broken shortcuts in your Start menu.

I wasn't sure what the Compressed Folders utility was all about. Usually I stay away from anything involving compression—DriveSpace, for example. But it turns out the compressed folders here are just ZIP files. You probably already have a bunch on your hard drive, and this is just a convenient way to open up a zip file in a temporary folder window without extracting the contents ahead of time. You can also create a "compressed folder," (or zip file) by selecting Compressed Folder from the New menu after right-clicking inside the folder where you want to create a new zip file. Then just drag files into the compressed folder. According to some newsgroup postings I've seen, this utility is not a full substitute for WinZip if you already have that program, but it meets my simple needs.

• • •

To use Plus! 98 you need to have Windows 98 installed on at least a Pentium 90 machine with 16MB of RAM and 100 to 150 MB of hard drive space. Plus! 98 can be had for \$30-40, cheaper than Plus! for Windows 95. At the lower price I think Plus! 98 has been worthwhile for me and has added to my enjoyment of Windows 98.

RICHARD CORZO is a computer programmer currently working for Packard BioScience Company in Meriden, CT. He has been working with 32-bit PC operating systems for the past six years. You can contact Richard at rcorzo@ibm.net.

Special Interest Groups

ACCESS. Designs and implements solutions using Microsoft Access database management.

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920. Meets on 2nd Tuesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next meeting: September 8.

ADVANCED OPERATING SYSTEMS. Uses, explores, and develops OS/2, BSD UNIX and NT operating systems.

Contact: Don Pearson, 914 669-9622.

Meets on Wednesday of the week following the general meeting, 7:30 p.m., at Don Pearson's office, North Salem, NY.

Next meeting: September 9.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING. Edits and produces *dacs.doc*. Anyone interested in the art of newsletter publishing is welcome.

Contact: Allan Ostergren, 860 210-0047 or Marc Cohen 203 775-1102. Meets on Thursday following monthly general meeting, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next meeting: Suspended until further notice.

EDUCATION. Coordinates DACS education classes.

Contact: Charlie Bovaird, 203 792-7881. Meets as needed.

FINANCIAL. Discusses various investment strategies, emphasizing careful selection to maximize profits and limit risk.

Contact: Will Toll, 203 270-1519, or Paul Gehrett, 203 426-8436. Meets 3rd Thursday, 7:30p.m., Edmond Town Hall, Newtown.

Next Meeting: September 17.

GRAPHICS. Create and print high-quality graphics and images.

Contact: Ken Graff, 203 775-6667. Meets on last Wednesday, 7p.m., at Best Photo, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: September 30.

INTERNET. Acquaints DACS members with the Internet.

Contact: Larry Stevens (LStevens@aol.com) or Richard Koser (rkoser@usa.net). Meets on 3rd Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: October 21.

MACINTOSH. Discusses Macintosh hardware and software.

Contact: Chris Salaz 203 798-6417. Meets on 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: September 15.

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps. using Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 or Jim Scheef, 860 355-8001. Meets on 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: September 2.

VOICE FOR JOANIE. Provides and supports people with Lou Gehrig's disease with special PC computer equipment.

Contact: Shirley Fredlund, 860 355-2611 x4517.

Meets on last Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at Datahr, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: September 29.

WALL STREET. Examines new stock market software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway, 203 367-1202. Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at A. G. Edwards office, 42 Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury.

Next Meeting: September 28.

WEB SITE DESIGN. Designs and maintains *dacs.org*, the DACS Web site.

Contact: Jeff Setaro, 203 748-6748. Meets on 2nd Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: September 9.

WINDOWS. Explores all aspects of Windows 95 and 3.1.

Contact: Ben Carnevale, 203 748-1751. Meets on 1st Friday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

Next Meeting: October 2.

SIG News and New to ...

The SIG Notes and Calendar are available on the Internet on Dan McLeod's home page at <http://www.concentric.net/~dwmcleod/signotes.htm>. Please direct your comments on the Internet SIG Notes by e-mail to Dan at dwmcleod@concentric.net.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

The DTP SIG will suspend meetings until a new SIG leader can be found.

GRAPHICS

The Graphics SIG will resume meeting on Sept. 30.

INTERNET

The Internet SIG will resume in October 21 with new co-leaders. Diane Greenwald, who did an outstanding job as Internet SIG leader for several years, is passing the reins to Internet SIG members Larry Stevens and Richard Koser. Best of luck to both of you. The SIG will now meet at the DACS Resource Center.

VISUAL BASIC

The discussion at the August meeting centered on one of Chuck Fizer's projects that uses COM. It was interesting to see how COM fits into a real-world program. Next month the program will be on Active Server Pages. See you there!

WINDOWS

The Windows SIG will resume in October but will meet on the first Friday of the month instead of the second.



NEW TO WINDOWS 98

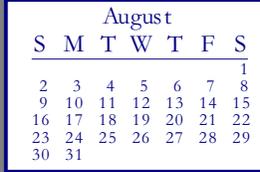
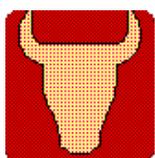
If you are curious about what Windows 98 might have in store for you, mark your calendar for September 23. New to Windows 98 is the latest in DACS' New to series and should help to answer any questions you may have about Windows 98.

Topics to be covered include: What is new in Windows 98; Should I update to Windows 98?; What is the best way to upgrade?; and How can I get the features of Windows 98 without updating?

Wally David, DACS Chairman, will be hosting the meeting, to be held at the DACS Resource Center from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM. The Resource Center is located in the Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury.

September 1998

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>1</p>  <p>7:00 PM General Meeting: Danbury Hospital</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>7:00 PM Visual Basic: Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>  <p>NEW SLETTER DEADLINE</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>7:30 PM DACS Directors' Mtg.</p>	<p>8</p>  <p>7:00 PM Access: Bruce Preston 203 431-2920</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7:00 PM Web Site Design: Jeff Setaro 203 748-6748</p> <p>7:30 PM ACS: Don Pearson 914 669-9622</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>SIG NOTES DEADLINE</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>  <p>7:30 PM Mac: Chris Salaz 203 798-6417</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>  <p>7:30 PM Financial: Will Toll 203 270-1519</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>6:30 PM New to Windows 98: Wally David 203 790-7286</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>  <p>7:00 PM Wall St. Phil Dilloway 203 367-1202</p>	<p>29</p>  <p>7:30 PM Voice for Joanie: Shirley Fredlund 860 355-2611 x4517</p>	<p>30</p>  <p>7:00 PM Graphics: Ken Graff 203 775-6667</p>			

Calendar and SIG Notes are available on the Internet at <http://www.concentric.net/~dwmcleod/signotes.htm>

Tune in to E-Media Zone

The E-media Zone is a weekly radio show that blends humor and information about electronic media. Each show features guest experts, phone-in interviews, reviews, and how-to's, covering such varied topics as health, business, entertainment, graphic arts, music, travel, sports, recreation, and education.

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Buying a New Computer

by Jacqueline Renee Cohen

WHEN I NEEDED a new laptop, my search for the best machine offered at the best price led me on a long and winding road that started at PC Expo and ended online.

To begin my search, I did some research and discovered what was available and what specs I felt I would need. PC Expo was a great place for this because I was able to touch and see all of the latest models and ask questions of knowledgeable representatives. I knew I wanted to wait until August to buy, so price wasn't too important at the time.

Computer magazines are great for looking at pictures and reading reviews, but the prices are off and often the last model reviewed is not the most recent one on the market. Still they give you a good idea of what is out there and how it compares to competitive products. I learned that it is always necessary to call and check on the price—one product listed at \$2,999, for instance, was actually selling for \$2,600 when I phoned the company to confirm.

August. The clock was ticking, and I needed to order my laptop since I would soon be leaving for Hong Kong to start my new job. At PC Expo I had decided on the Digital HiNote VP 745/266 MMX. But by now these were hard to find, still quite pricey, and hadn't advanced to the new Mobile Pentium II chip. So back to the drawing board.

This time I switched my sights to the IBM Thinkpad 380XD Mobile Pentium II/266 Mhz, 64MB RAM, 5.5 GB HD, 24x CD, floppy, etc. I looked at IBM's Web site at www.ibm.com to find out the details and the manufacturer's part number. Always try to get the part number so you can ask specifically for what you want and not be led to a similar but dif-

ferent product. IBM's Web site lists distributors to call for availability and purchase price. It listed the average selling price at \$2,754.28 for the same machine with only 32MB RAM.

I called all of the distributors and was informed that they were on backorder and would not be in until the end of the month. Since I was leaving in three weeks, this was not good news. So I called IBM to see when they would be shipping more. They never got back to me. I had waited until the last minute to buy my computer because prices drop and technology improves every

week. But now my strategy was working against me. In desperation, I went back online.

Online shopping has become quite popular. First I went to CompUSA's Web site and looked at their sale items; then I tried www.cdw.com, www.pczone.com, www.warehouse.com, and www.pcconnection.com. The last one was a gold mine.

PC Connection's Web site is well organized: I was easily able to search for the specs I wanted, get the results listed by price or manufacturer, browse their clearance items, and check out products by manufacturer. It was also often possible to click on a product and receive more details.

All of the online sellers were also out of the Thinkpad 380XD, but I found a refurbished one at pcconnection.com available through their clearance shop. It was listed at \$2,299 for 32 MB RAM.

I am a teacher, so when I called PC Connection I asked about discounts. The sales rep referred me to the education department, where I spent about 15-20 minutes on the phone with somebody named Jim, who informed me that IBM

does indeed offer discounts to teachers and that the computer could be mine for \$2,205. I asked about the extra 32MB RAM I required—for \$55 it was well below the going rate and the installation was free. Shipping via Airborne Express came to \$6. I will receive all of the manuals and programs that come with the original—it will just be in a white box. What I will *not* receive is the full one-year warranty—I'll get only 90 days.

So for a total of \$2,266 I'll be getting a computer I had priced out at over \$2,800 by the nearest competitor (CDW). What did I learn during this process?

Do research. Know what you want (the model number and all of the specs) so you won't be led to a product you don't want by a pushy salesperson or a lousy Website.

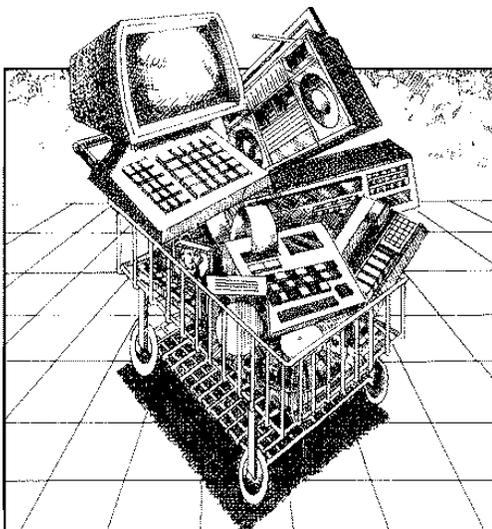
Ask questions. When I wanted an extra 32 of RAM, for instance, I was quoted between \$72 and \$125, both with free installation. Shipping ran from \$6 to \$45. Many manufacturers offer a variety of teacher / student/ charity/ nonprofit organization discounts. I found PC Connection's education representative extremely helpful.

Check prices. What's listed in ads and on Websites is often more than what the product is selling for by the time you want to buy it. Always call and ask.

Be patient. Making phone calls, visiting Websites, and reading magazines takes a lot of time. Not including my prior research at PC Expo, I probably spent a solid 15 hours over three days finding exactly what I wanted for the right price. And remember the longer you wait, the lower the price and the better the technology.

So now that I have my new, smooth IBM ThinkPad 380XD (It arrived overnight by Federal Express!), I am ready to set off for Hong Kong and explore the software market!

JACQUELINE COHEN, the daughter of *dacs.doc* production editor, Marc Cohen, has taught English in Turkey, Taiwan, and Nepal, and is an expert Internet researcher. She will soon be teaching in Hong Kong.



Web Page Design I

Creating Simple Web Pages

PageMill 3.0, Part I

by Marlene Gaberel

UNTIL RECENTLY, putting a Web page together chiefly involved my use of Notepad and inserting HTML codes that I picked up from Laura Lemay's great book *Teach Yourself Web Publishing with HTML 3.0*. But now that I have Adobe's Page Mill 3.0, the task has become much easier. Inserting images, animated GIFs, Shockwave, sounds and movie clips is as simple as dragging items into Page Mill's pasteboard and placing them on the page.

A recent challenge was to create a Web page for an after-school dancing program at the Newtown Middle School. Reviews of Page Mill that I came across in different publications showed me that designers were able to create a whole Web site in a couple of hours. I admit it took me longer than that to create a decent site, since I first had to learn to navigate the program (Page Mill is not entirely intuitive, in my opinion).

Features

Page Mill 3.0 comes on a CD that includes a choice of buttons, backgrounds, movie clips, images, and sound. In addition, you can download more animation from Xoom Web site, but each time I tried to access it, the site is busy. Page Mill 3.0 also has a spell-checker, which I find a bit awkward since it never tells you when it's finished checking a story (MS Word at least says "Spell Check complete") and would probably go on checking forever if you didn't stop it.

Help

To get acquainted with Page Mill 3.0, I first spent some time taking the tour. Soon I was ready to move from the tuto-

rial and start creating a page. Once upon a time software came with big thick manuals. But now Help files are more prevalent, and Page Mill is no different. The manual covers tutorial material and includes the basics. Pressing F1 from within the program brings up the Help file.

Easy to use

With Page Mill it is a snap to add backgrounds and insert tables, e-mail addresses, and links within and outside the site. It is also easy to create a form, inserting checkboxes, radio and pop-up buttons, and password fields.

Useful tools

The program offers several organizational tools to help you manage your site. Page Mill 3.0 recommends doing site upkeep from within the program not from another program, though this is possible. The site over-

view and list view are both convenient tools for keeping the site organized and show a graphical view of file locations. You can also use the organizational tools to check for broken links.

Edit, click, preview

It takes a click of the mouse to move from Edit mode, in which you create your site, to Preview mode, where you can see how your page will really look on the page. You can also preview your page easily through Internet Explorer, which is tightly integrated with Page Mill, or less easily with Netscape.

Uploading

Uploading from within Page Mill is very convenient. After checking your site

by using one of the three convenient organizational tools, you can easily upload it. I simply added information about my ISP and the site was up. Subsequently, when pages are modified or added, those specific pages can be uploaded to the rest of the site. A log file listing the uploaded files and the status of the upload can be viewed and printed.

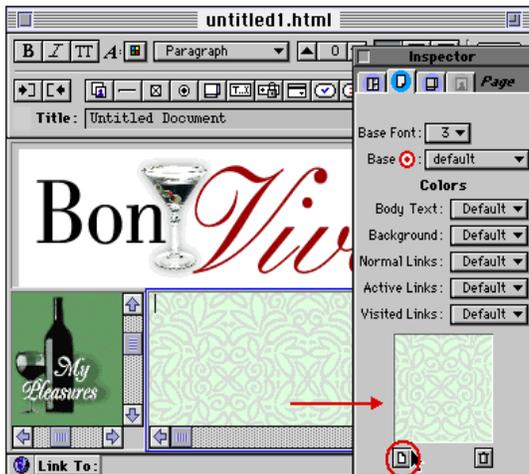
System Requirements

Page Mill 3.0's minimum recommendations call for a 486 processor using Windows 95 with 16MB of RAM. I use the program on a Pentium II and found it stable: It never crashed my machine and didn't give me any error messages.

• • •

Within a couple of days I managed to accumulate enough basic knowledge to create a rudimentary site. In the fall, when the school staff is back, the site I created will be moved to the school page. In the meantime, I put it on my space at <http://w3.nai.net/~mgaberel>. Page Mill 3.0 has lots of potential and I am looking forward to using it more to take advantage of all its tools. Visit the Page Mill page on Adobe's site at <http://www.adobe.com>.

MARLENE GABEREL is a DACS vice president, director of publicity, and assistant Webmaster. You may contact Marlene at mgaberel@ct1.nai.net.



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Web Page Design II

Advanced Page Making PageMill 3.0, Part 2

By Mike Kaltschnee

If you haven't read Marlene Gaberel's review of PageMill on page 12, do it now. This article is meant to pick up where she leaves off, and may not make complete sense unless you get her insight first.

PageMill is a product I've owned since the beginning, literally. I bought one of the first copies at a trade show, and even paid the full retail price. I was very excited about a program that automatically wrote the Web page codes for you because I was doing it by hand. Before PageMill, I used Notepad and an HTML book (Laura LeMay's *Learn HTML in 14 days*). It was a laborious process, taking a lot of time to figure out the complicated commands like tables and frames. PageMill was supposed to save us from ourselves.

PageMill 1.0 didn't exactly live up to its promise, but it was a great start. I even wrote one of my first reviews for DACS on PageMill several years ago. Adobe's come a long way with the product, and I'm even considering using the latest version for my personal page work. I like the interface; it's simple and intuitive. The commands I use most often are usually only two clicks away, and I had little trouble finding anything.

One thing to look for in an HTML editor is the code it writes, so I created a fairly complex page and viewed it in Notepad. The code PageMill writes is simple and easy to modify. The reason you should care about the code is that you will wind up "fixing" it at some point or another. No matter how good these tools are, I always find a bug or code that I have to modify for the page

to work the way I want. Some HTML tools, like NetObjects Fusion or GoLive CyberStudio, write code that is too hard to update. They use tricks to create great-looking pages, but you can't update the code yourself.

Included with PageMill are several useful items. Adobe bundled PhotoShop LE, a simpler, easier-to-use version of PhotoShop. Most of us don't need all of the features of PhotoShop, or the price tag. PhotoShop LE is a great program, with all of the features you need to create and edit images for the Web. It also included a lot of Web

images, templates, and even some Java programs you can add to your site. An advanced addition is O'Reilly's Website, a full-featured Webserver, enabling you to post your pages using your computer so anyone on the Internet can see them. If you're really an advanced user, they've included Perl scripts from Matt's Script Archive so you can add a guestbook and other features.

Site management is becoming more important as Web sites become larger. Adobe PageMill includes a simple site-management tool that is integrated nicely with the editor. It can help you find broken links, inside and outside of your site. This has got to be one of the worst chores in Web page creation, and PageMill has solved it.

Another nice feature is being able to visually view the layout of your site and see just what is linked where. The biggest mistake most beginning Web designers make is to forget to

spellcheck, and the site manager can check the entire site at once. Very nice.

One thing I find missing in PageMill is "themes." NetObjects Fusion and Microsoft FrontPage both support graphical themes, which make it easy to test or change the look and feel of your Web site. PageMill does allow you to search and replace images, but if you're prototyping a site, themes make it much faster and easier.

My final recommendation is that PageMill is perfect for most people and businesses. You don't need an industrial strength Web editor to create your site, and PageMill is strong in every key area I explored. Best yet, it works on Macintosh and Windows computers (FrontPage Mac is not being updated past version 1.0, according to Microsoft).

The only real market issue with PageMill is the Microsoft reality. FrontPage '98 is a good, solid product, and with its marketing clout, Microsoft has sold more than a million copies to date. It's hard to compete with Microsoft, especially when they include FrontPage in the upcoming version of Office or Windows '98 (FrontPad is a "lite" version of FrontPage). But if anyone can compete, it's Adobe. By targeting their artistic customer base, they should do well.

I was going to put together a few quick pages as a demo, but I think this is a good way to plug our very own Web site, <http://www.dacs.org>. Another behind-the-scenes DACS member is Jeff Setaro. Jeff has taken over Jim Scheef's Web site project, and he's using PageMill. So, if you need an example of the power of PageMill, check out the DACS Web site.

MIKE KALTSCHNEE is a founder of DeMorgan Industries Corp., the leading developer of Web graphics (<http://www.webspice.com>), and also teaches Webmaster and Internet marketing classes at the Internet School at Naugatuck Valley Community Technology College. You can reach Mike at: mikek@demorgan.com.

Random Access

Instant replay: August 1998

Bruce Preston, Moderator

DACS MEMBERS who are unable to attend the monthly General Meeting may still pose questions to the group by submitting their questions to askdacs@aol.com by the night before the meeting.

Q. I rebuilt my machine with a new hard disk and, as part of it, installed the trial version of McAfee's Virus Scan. Since then, the system has seriously slowed down. I want to remove it, but since it is software for Windows 3.11, it doesn't have an "uninstall" capability. What do I have to remove?

A. Find references to Vshield in CONFIG.SYS, AUTOEXEC.BAT, C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM.INI and C:\WINDOWS\WIN.INI. You can comment out the lines by typing REM at the beginning of the lines that reference Vshield in .SYS and .BAT, and adding a semicolon (;) at the start of the .INI files. If there are multiple programs referenced in the RUN= or LOAD= lines in the .INI files, duplicate the whole line, place a semicolon (;) at the start of the original and then edit out the portion that references Vshield. This will leave other items active. With Windows 3.1x, you do not have to worry about the registry. You also might go to www.nai.com and check the FAQ area—or post the question on their Web site.

Q. I upgraded my Netscape Navigator browser to 4.0 and have now lost the Adobe Acrobat reader as a plug-in. How do I get it to work again?

A. If you reinstall the reader, it will detect that your default browser is now 4.0 and attach itself to Navigator 4.0. The current installation is only attached to your previous browser. When it installs, it will ask you which browser to attach to if you have more than one installed.

Q. When I visit some sites on the Internet I get a message that says "Java script error." What is happening and how do I cure it? I am using Internet Explorer 4.0.

A. Java script is a bit different from regular Java. Usually the page will continue if you respond to the question on the screen. You should consider getting the IE4 upgrade to 4.01 since it contains bug fixes and security patches; you should also get it if you are using Outlook Express. You can download the upgrade for free from Microsoft, or you can get it on a CD at a nominal cost. Go to the Microsoft Web site.

Q. I have a Web site that is found by most search engines but is never "hit" by the Excite search engine. Is there something that I have to do for Excite to find it?

A. More and more search engines are now only visiting and indexing a site if it has been "registered" by the site's Web master. You can do this by going to the search engine site and giving it the URL of your site. In addition, there are "meta tags" you may place in your Web page that indicate to some, not all, search engines which words are pertinent to your page and should be included in its index.

Q. I have perhaps a thousand file entries in my Netscape cache. How do I get rid of them? (Note: this question is pertinent to Internet Explorer as well.) I can't seem to delete them from Windows Explorer.

A. There are several ways of doing it. First, the browser itself usually has a button buried somewhere in the Options or Preferences screen that says "Erase the cache." You may use it. There are also commercial add-on utilities such as Quarterdeck's CleanSweep (the August presentation) or Cybermedia's Internet Guard Dog, both of which offer to clean the cache each time you disconnect from the Internet.

Why would you not clean the cache? If you visit a site frequently, the browser will recognize the pages and graphics it has already "seen" and stored in the cache, and won't reload them via your dial-up

connection the next time you reference the site. This is how using the "back" command operates so quickly. Within the browser configuration, you can set how much disk space you want to allocate to the cache; once you hit this limit, the files in the cache that have not been recently displayed will be deleted. Two reasons to delete the cache are 1) to save space on a system that is tight for disk storage, and 2) to establish privacy/security.

Q. I have icons that "drift" about an inch or two in from the right edge of the screen. What causes this?

A. You are probably normally running your display at a resolution of 800x600 (or higher). If you (or an application such as a game) change the application to the standard VGA resolution 640x480, the icons would be invisible, off the right edge or bottom of the screen. Windows moves them (perhaps stacking one on top of the other if there are many!) so that you can see them. Unfortunately, it does not put them back where they were when you (or the application) return to 800x600 setting. If you right-click on the desktop and select AutoArrange, they will all evenly position themselves along the left margin of the screen and thus will not be disturbed by screen resolution changes. Someone mentioned a utility that appeared in PC Magazine a few months ago that addresses this problem. you might check their Web site.

Q. There is a service that for \$100 will list/register your Web site with 800 search engines. They require a list of keywords that you want registered, but all of the words must be single words rather than phrases. Does this sound right?

A. Usually registering with a search engine issues an invitation to the search engine to read the site and index the pages according to its own methodology. Some older engines might require that the keywords be identified by the Web master. The consensus is that this requirement by the service might be to support the older engines. If the engine isn't smart enough to read the contents

of the page, then it probably isn't going to be able to handle multiword keywords. You might put the multiword phrases into meta tags in the page header(s).

Q. What is the story with the security problem with e-mail and long attachment filenames?

A. If the filename is longer than about 255 characters, it appears that it will permit an application referenced in an HTML page to be executed without alerting the user. This problem has been addressed by the browser publishers. There are no known instances of this happening other than in "the lab". Check the www.nai.com Web site for more information.

Q. What are Internet cookies?

A. A cookie is a text file that is not dangerous and cannot do anything destructive. It is used by Web sites to store "state" information for the next time you visit the site (which

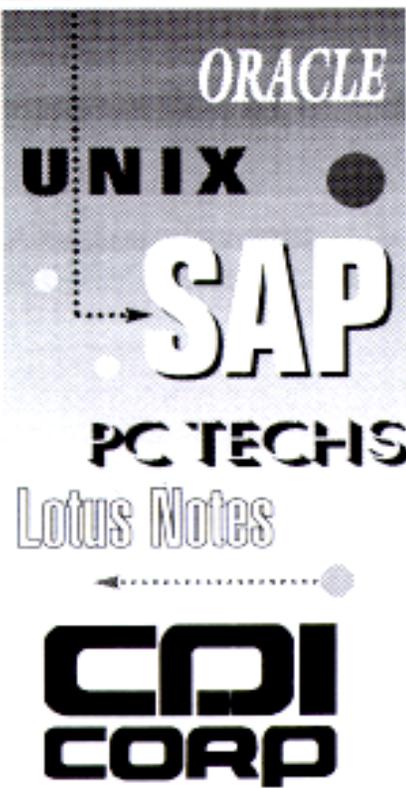
may be as simple as going to the next page). For example, a search engine may place an encoded reference to the results of your search so that when you say "show me the next ten hits" it knows which temporary file on the search engine's disk to read from. If you have ever used a site that has "add to shopping cart," the codes identifying your product choices are stored in a cookie. The cookie usually has an "expiration date," although many sites put ridiculously long lifetimes on their cookies. You can disable cookies in the browser, but for some sites, if you disable the cookies then you can't always make use of the capabilities of the site.

Follow-up item: We always like to hear that a problem was resolved via Random Access. In the previous session, several members had problems with the paper-feed mechanism in their HP DeskJet printers. Upon our suggestion, one of them found a page on the HP Web site ([http://www.hp.com/cposupport/printers/](http://www.hp.com/cposupport/printers/support_doc/bpd02223.html)

[support_doc/bpd02223.html](http://www.hp.com/cposupport/printers/support_doc/bpd02223.html) that listed a large number of printers manufactured between June 1993 and March 1994 whose rollers were made with a rubber that tended to "glaze" and not move the paper. HP has a free repair tool, which they will send upon request, that is placed into the paper-feed area. A supplied utility program is then used to make the rollers turn for about 15 minutes. The tool has a mild abrasive surface (similar to a Scotch-Brite scouring pad), which will remove the glazed surface from the rubber rollers, restoring functionality. If you have an HP DeskJet 510, DeskWriter 510, DeskJet 520, DeskWriter 520, DeskJet 550C or DeskJet 560C printer, be sure to visit the site to determine if your printer is likely to require the kit.

BRUCE PRESTON is president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT, specializing in database applications. A DACS director and moderator of the Random Access sessions at the general meetings, Bruce also leads the Access SIG.

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