

SIXTEEN BITS - ISSN 0817-0991

May 2004

**PC Users Group: ABN 94 130 344 129**

**SIXTEEN BITS is published by the PC Users Group (ACT) Inc.**

### **June Monthly Meeting**

**7:30 pm Monday 28th June. Manning Clark Theatre ANU**

### **Genealogy: Sleuthing the Past**

Have you ever wondered what living conditions were like in the time of your ancestors? Do you know who their siblings were and where they lived? Thousands of Australians practice genealogy to some degree, whether it is merely recording their immediate ancestors' names or actually looking back centuries to record the history and conditions of their forbears. It can be an occasional hobby or a full-time occupation, depending on your motivation.

The PC Users Group (ACT) and the Computer SIG of the Heraldry and Genealogy Society together bring you two speakers for the June free monthly meeting. The first will be Cora Num, a qualified genealogist with 22 years experience and the author of *Web Sites for Genealogists* (now in the 8th Edition). Cora has a Diploma in Family Historical Studies and is a Fellow of the Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra. She will explain how to find out more about our ancestors from the web. In particular, she will be showing web sites where official information, such as registry information, wills, maps, or military service record, have been recorded digitally and are available online to researchers. The computer and the Internet as essential research tools, combined with the recent trend to convert official records to digital format, makes it so much easier to find and verify information. Visit her site [www.coraweb.com.au](http://www.coraweb.com.au) for more information.

When you have collected all your information, the next problem is how to store and organise it. Our second speaker, Shane Baker, is a member of both PCUG and the Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra. Shane will demonstrate *The Master Genealogist*. This software package can store massive amounts of data then rearrange it into whatever format you want. The database can be used to compare conflicting records, to extract the one category of information or to conduct searches for specific factors. Text, photographs, maps and more can be extracted as required for reports or planning a research trip. It can even be used to print a book, complete with bibliography, footnotes, references and index. For details of the software visit [www.whollygenes.com](http://www.whollygenes.com).

If you are interested in genealogy, or merely want to see how it is done, come along to **Theatre 3**, Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University on 28 June 2004 at 7.30pm. It's free and open to the public. Free door prizes for PCUG members. So bring your family, friends, workmates and any ancestral ghosts. More details and map at <http://www.pcug.org.au/mmm.htm>

**All Welcome - It's free and open to the public**

## Trainers Wanted

Terry Giesecke (the training coordinator would like to have a course run on Windows XP, how to get the most out of it and use its features along with the most effective use of system tools such as scandisk etc.

If you can help please contact Terry on [terryg@pcug.org.au](mailto:terryg@pcug.org.au)

"The Linux Learners SIG has set up a Linux Demonstration PC in the PCUG Centre. Any member of PCUG may try this system. Please check with the Staffer before using the PC"

The LAN Manager and Exec Sec have been advised of the above.

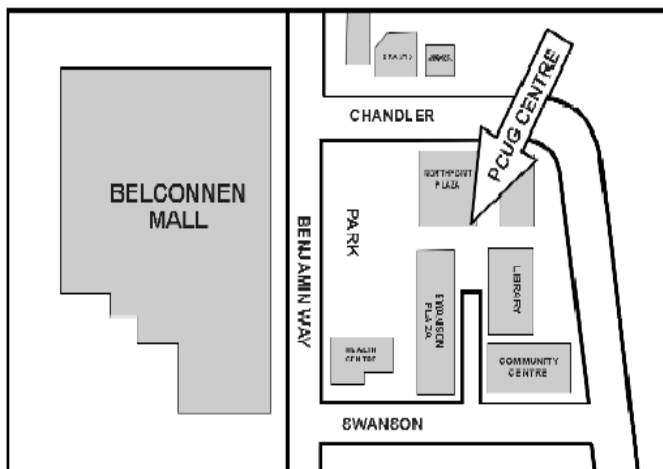
Rod Peters - Linux Learner's SIG Convener (6251 2580)

### Committee Meetings -Time 7pm

Monday	12 July
Monday	9 August
Monday	13 September
Monday	11 October
Monday	8 November
Monday	13 December

Committee meetings are always held at the PC Users Group (ACT) Centre, Northpoint Plaza, Belconnen.

All members welcome



PC USERS GROUP (ACT) Inc.  
<http://www.pcug.org.au>

Main phone number: (02) 6253 4911  
(answering machine when Centre unattended)

Fax number: (02) 6253 4922  
Email: [pcug@pcug.org.au](mailto:pcug@pcug.org.au)

Postal address  
P.O. Box 42 Belconnen ACT 2616

Executive Secretary: Madeline Mould  
Email: [pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au](mailto:pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au)

PC Users Group Centre  
Northpoint Plaza, Belconnen

Opening Hours:  
Weekdays (Monday to Friday) 10 am-2 pm  
Saturdays and Sundays 10 am-4 pm (closed long weekends)

## PCUG Broadband Internet Service Now Available

PCUG now offers members Broadband Access to the internet using the ADSL system. Of course this is in addition to the services we already provide to members in our Internet Service - dial-up and broadband through TransACT.

The PCUG ADSL service is available anywhere in the ACT and NSW (and later anywhere in Australia), where the telephone lines are suitable for ADSL, that includes everywhere in the ACT and NSW that TransACT does not service.

Not the cheapest, but the best value for money! Do not be tricked by apparently cheaper offers that finish up costing you an arm and a leg in excess usage charges! Our charges are low and our download quotas the highest.

For more information on how the ADSL system works and detailed instructions on how to install it in your home, go to the website at <[http://www.pcug.org.au/res-dsl/adsl\\_info.html](http://www.pcug.org.au/res-dsl/adsl_info.html)>, or alternatively go to the PCUG Home Page at <<<http://www.pcug.org.au>> and follow the link to PCUG ADSL.

If you would like to find out if ADSL is available at your place, telephone the PCUG Centre and ask.

## PCUG Training Report

As our current training program is coming to an end I am seeking to set up some new training courses for Mid winter and Spring.

Courses that have been run this year include:

- Web page design Intro and advanced
- Adobe
- Introduction to Digital photography

Last year:

- Linux

Courses which did not run do to lack of enrollment

- Dream Weaver
- Desk top publishing

If there are any courses that you would like to run please let me know, The first dates would be late July so as to enable them to obtain adequate promotion.

Thank you

Terry Giesecke

***(Editors Note: Thanks to Terry and all the trainers for their fantastic work)***

**For Your Fridge Door  
EVENTS 2003  
PCUG Centre: 6353 4911**

PROGRAM Monthly Meetings: Time: 7.30 pm			
Monday	28 June 2004	Genealogy - Sluething the past	Cora Num & Shane Baker
Monday	26 July 2004	Computer use in Investment	
Monday	30 August 2004	Open Source Software	
Monday	27 September 2004		(Annual Meeting)
Monday	25 October 2004		

SIGS- Special Interest Groups			
<b>Coffee &amp; Chat (North)</b>	Western District Rugby Union Club	10:00am 11:30am Alternate Tuesdays	Jim Dick mobyj@pcug.org.au
<b>Bytes</b>	6pm Asian Bistro ANU Union	PCUG Meeting nights	Andrew Freeman 6258 7411 afreeman@pcug.org.au
<b>Computers &amp; Vegetarianism</b>	Meets with Bytes SIG	PCUG Meeting nights	Andrew Freeman 6258 7411 afreeman@pcug.org.au
<b>Investment</b>	PCUG Centre Belconnen	7:30pm 4th Thursday	Roger Penhale 6290 0807 rpenhale@pcug.org.au
<b>Networking</b>	PCUG Centre Belconnen	7:30pm 1st Wednesday	Allan Hepworth allanh@pcug.org.au 0418 445 006
<b>Internet Daytime Demo &amp; Discussion</b>	PCUG Centre Belconnen	10:00 am- Noon Every second Thursday	Allan Mikkelsen Amikkels@pcug.org.au
<b>Linux User Group</b>	Room N101 Computer Science Dept. ANU	7:00pm 4th Thursday	Stephen Rothwell sfr@canb.auug.org.au
<b>Linux Learners</b>	PCUG Centre Belconnen	10 until 12 Every second Thursday	Rodney Peters rpeters@pcug.org.au
<b>Evening Internet</b>	PCUG Centre Belconnen	7:00 pm Last Tuesday	Marion van Wely 6258 8750
<b>Coffee &amp; Chat (Southside)</b>	Irish Club Weston	10:00-11:30 Alternate Tuesday	Jim Dick mobyj@pcug.org.au
<b>Digital Imaging</b>	Irish Club Weston	1:00 - 2:30 pm Alternate Tuesdays as for C&C Weston	Jeff Colwell jeffmeg@webone.com.au

**FOR ALL ENQUIRIES AND PAYMENTS**

regarding broadband, dial-up and other PC Users Group (ACT) services

Please contact THE PC USERS GROUP (ACT) Inc.  
Email: pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au

Telephone: 02- 6253 4911  
<http://www.pcug.org.au/pcug/>

**TransACT Communications does not handle any PCUG internet accounts nor PCUG memberships.**

## 2004 COMMITTEE

To reach all Committee members via email: [pcug.committee@pcug.org.au](mailto:pcug.committee@pcug.org.au)

<b>President</b> David Lewis	<a href="mailto:pcug.president@pcug.org.au">pcug.president@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 6226 8811 Mob: 0417 708811
<b>Treasurer &amp; Public Officer</b> Noel Matthews	<a href="mailto:nomatthe@pcug.org.au">nomatthe@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 02 6257 1962
<b>Secretary</b> Tom Hayes	<a href="mailto:pcug.secretary@pcug.org.au">pcug.secretary@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 6254 2596
<b>Vice President</b> Vacant		
	<b>General Committee</b>	
Graeme Evans	<a href="mailto:evans_digdiv@yahoo.com.au">evans_digdiv@yahoo.com.au</a>	Tel: 6251 6849
Paul Free	<a href="mailto:paul.free@pcug.org.au">paul.free@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 6251 1030
Allan Hepworth	<a href="mailto:allanh@pcug.org.au">allanh@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 0418 445 006
Keith Sayers	<a href="mailto:kmsayers@pcug.org.au">kmsayers@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 6258 6238
John Hodge	<a href="mailto:hodgej@pcug.org.au">hodgej@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 0404 328 468
Ken Ford	<a href="mailto:kenford@pcug.org.au">kenford@pcug.org.au</a>	Tel: 6259 0475

### Renewing your PCUG Membership or Internet Service Subscription (Dial-up or Broadband)

Members are reminded that they must provide both their log-in id (part before @ of your basic e-mail address) and membership number when they renew membership for Internet Service Subscription or Broadband.

PCUG membership renewal in particular does require your number as there are quite a few people who not only have the same surname but also the same first name.

When renewing by mail or telephone please fill in the renewal form at the end of this newsletter, it is essential that you correctly identify yourself with both username and PCUG membership number.

Members who fail to provide correct information may find that their payments have not been credited to them or that their renewal is withheld until details can be checked.

Help us to keep you up to date.

Please ensure that all details regarding your membership is up-to-date.

"Please advise the Executive Secretary at email <[pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au](mailto:pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au)> of all changes of address, telephone or email address."

**Please Note:** *The web based facility to pay PCUG subscriptions is temporarily unavailable*

### CHECK THE SECURITY OF YOUR INTERNET CONNECTED COMPUTER

Gibson Research Corporation offers a free service which will do a thorough check on which ports on your computer are vulnerable and also tells you what to do. The service is called "Shields UP" - Just browse to this web site and follow the instructions - <<https://grc.com/x/ne.dll?bh0bkyd2>>.

## President's Report

Why is it such a pleasure to report to you this month? Have we turned a corner? No, we have done more than that, we have turned several corners. Almost without exception things are looking good for the PCUG. There is a new vibrancy and things are happening. Not so bad for an 'ageing' organisation, eh, is it?

Let me explain. Let's get crunchy with figures first; please look at the financial chart which Noel Matthews has provided elsewhere in this newsletter. It shows we are moving towards a positive financial outcome and that the cash deficits of the past few years are a thing of the past (well for this year anyway). Wait, there's more, training room bookings are up - not enough yet but very positive in the last couple of months (remember to tell your professional friends of this facility). During the last half year we have been able to reduce most, if not all, of our internet charges and we have, even more importantly, been able to offer more options for our members. But whilst these are things which affect our financial figures there is good news on a number of other fronts.

Monthly meetings have been outstanding this year. A variety of interesting topics have been presented with a resultant increase in the numbers attending meetings. Gee, what haven't we covered - spam management, printer requirements, most recently an outstanding 'Airshow' (reported on elsewhere) and more to come.

We have revamped the New Members' Night into a general Members' Information Session for both new and existing members held in the day-time (Saturday). It is held less frequently than monthly but the aim is to improve the event to look after both you and the new members. The first session in the new format, in early May, was most interesting, showing the changes to the Centre, encouraging involvement in SIGS (special interest groups), providing very useful TransAct information and, above all, being interesting in its content. Numbers? Not great, but an improvement on previous sessions and, as the new format becomes more well known, we expect even more to turn up. Why not? Especially as the facilities in the Centre are improving and this is one way to find out about them.

These facilities include the previous advice about the new Media Centre, but I bet you didn't know that these are being progressively upgraded so that you can do more things - it's not just copying old records, it catering for a variety of other needs such as video copying. And there's more. The latest purchase is a very good scanner with OCR software (that, for those who don't know, is Optical Character Recognition and means copying of typed/printed material into your computer so that the documents are able to be edited). Having just used a similar system at work I am most impressed.

Also positive is the feedback we are getting on this newsletter. Thanks to Lance Green who edits in the real sense - he goes and gets information to supplement the more formal material and does a very, very good job.

Other bits of good news - we have an improved presence at one of the computer fairs - see the advertisement in this newsletter. There was notable interest in the computer display 'manned' by John Hodge, Gordon Urquart and others.

Is there any bad news? Well our doom and gloom merchants point to our membership figures. These merchants of death have concentrated in putting the worst interpretation on these figures. Well, bad luck, guys, we haven't turned a corner yet but the signs are also there. First, the doom merchants have always presented the figures as a crisis - but when you look at it, there is an approximate straight line decline over a number of years which had a positive hiccup last month when our radio advertisements reduced the rate of decline. O.k. still a decline but not a crisis and our present financial situation has been achieved in spite of it. Better still, we are getting excellent feedback on the changes we have been making to PCUG as a whole which is making our membership happier with what we provide. The recent survey was most interesting because of the very positive way in which members responded. A final report is being prepared and will probably appear in next month's edition of the newsletter.

Two final reminders. First, we always need more volunteers so contact me if you are interested and don't know whom else to contact. Second, the time is coming to call for nominations for next year's committee so, if you like what we have done put yourself forward and add your help. If you don't like what we have done put your

self forward also - and make the changes yourself.

Best wishes.

David Lewis  
pcug.president@pcug.org.au

## PCUG Web Site Revision

### Background

Over the past several months the ISSC has gained the impression that many members consider that the PCUG Web Page should be revised for at least a couple of reasons.

Firstly, a number of members find the PCUG web site extremely difficult to navigate. As a result members are unable to find a great deal of the information that is put on the site and for that matter the material that is already on the site. Further such members are not able to avail themselves of the many services provided by the group.

There is also a concern that non-members who visit the site may also experience the some problem. Such visitors are therefore less likely to join the Group if that are not aware of the wide range services that the Group provides for its members.

The second reason is that the presentation of the site may be considered to be some what dated. There is some concern that it does not meet the modern standards of good web site design and therefore does not present a good impression on those that visit the site.

### Revision of Site

The ISSC has therefore established a small group to revisit the Site and consider ways of improving it. The group is in effect a Special Interest Group and has accepted the name the Serfs.

This SIG's role is primarily developmental and advisory. The group will advise the ISSC on:

- The basic rules of presentation and the most appropriate method of attaining those rules.
- Browser compliance,
- navigability methods and graphic appearance. It shall also be active in developing the site to appropriate standards.

### Discussion Sessions

A preliminary outline of a proposed site has recently been completed mainly to stimulate discussion. The Serf Group would like to discuss this proposal with members to get their comments and requirement of the Group's Web Site.

The Serf's will be holding some discussion session at the PCUG Centre and would welcome members of the SIGs to present their requirements. It is particularly interested in the parts of the Site visited by members and their views on the best methods to present the Site.

The sessions will be held at the PCUG Centre from 25th July so that the training room can be sued to facilitate the discussions. Members who are prepared to attend the sessions and give us the benefit of their ideas should contact Harry Souter at [hsouter@pcug.org.au](mailto:hsouter@pcug.org.au) indicate a preferable session date and time. It s proposed to limit each session to about ten members; however, there is no limit on the numbers of sessions that could be conducted. Please reply before 10 July.

On behalf of the PCUG Internet Services Sub-Committee

## **Report on the May Monthly Meeting The PCUG Air Show**

### **1. The PCUG Air Show**

An Air New Zealand Boeing 747 arrives at Sydney in early morning fog. A 'Lord of the Rings' paint scheme decorates the aircraft, which is accurately modelled. The audience appreciates the pilot's skill in making an instrument landing (ILS) through low cloud and fog with visibility down to half a mile.

A Tiger Moth takes off from sunny Popham Field in the UK and flies a circuit over the green countryside. The aircraft changes in mid-flight to a single-engined Piper Cub of 1930s vintage, to a twin-engined bi-plane De Havilland Rapide also of 1930s vintage and finally to the latest General Aviation light aircraft, a Cirrus SR-20 built of composite materials and with a 'glass' cockpit and navigation systems that can rival that of a Boeing 747 airliner. (During this demonstration the pilot's right instrument monitor fails (although the second screen is still visible to the audience), causing some confusion and the Cirrus is flown through treetops at the end of the field).

'Elvis', an Erickson S-64E Skycrane, well known in the Canberra region for its fire-fighting efforts, takes off from Canberra Airport, hovers over Lake Burley Griffin to take on water (automatically hovering as it increases its mass by many tonnes) and then dumps the water on a shore-side building. The helicopter returns to Canberra International Airport and lands on the taxiway.

An F-18E Hornet launches by catapult off CVN 73 (the USS George Washington), and performs several manoeuvres to display its agility. As it climbs to an altitude above 30,000 feet, its contrails begin. It returns to the ship for an arrestor wire landing. (As interactive air traffic control has been deactivated for simplicity during this presentation, the landing jet 'conflicts' with another aircraft taking off. This clash is resolved happily, because the other aircraft takes off without difficulty. This incident amused the audience no end.)

The audience was then flabbergasted to learn that the PCUG has invested in a Falcon 900 Bizjet with PCUG livery, very similar to the one that the Prime Minister had before upgrading his aircraft recently. The PCUG's Falcon jet regularly flies the Goulburn-Canberra route (but is available for general hire or longer term lease :-). The pilot selects a flight plan on the GPS display and loads it into the Falcon's cockpit display. The jet takes off easily and the autopilot is engaged to fly the Falcon on the planned route to Canberra via Lake Bathurst, Lake George South, Black Mountain Tower, Corin Reservoir and Williamsdale VOR (VHF Omnidirection Range) beacon, finishing with an ILS approach to runway 35 at Canberra International Airport.

During this flight, the GPS position and map is in total synchronisation with the Goulburn to Canberra scenery. Map examples show an instrument departure chart and an ILS chart for Canberra, including both the plan form and side elevation views of the chart. The 'passengers' explore the well-decorated interior of the Falcon 900. One passenger opens the passenger entry door in mid-flight, reminding the audience of the joke about the Prime Minister, the priest and the scout.

On audience request, a Douglas DC3 with its relatively sluggish control response is rolled and compared with the same manoeuvre from a fast, highly manoeuvrable and very responsive RAAF Macchi jet trainer. Questions and answers from the involved audience concluded the PCUG's Air Show.

### **2. Meeting report and credits**

All of these scenes and more were part of the PCUG Air Show, the May Main Monthly Meeting, flown by Roger Lowery (Air Commodore, retired), who has put tremendous effort into tailoring Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004 to be as real as possible in all ways: visually and aerodynamically, as well as simulating a real experience of air traffic and navigation, aircraft sounds, and weather. One of the large ANU screens showed the pilot's view, passenger view, or various viewpoints from outside the aircraft; the second screen showed cockpit instruments at work, including a Global Position System and various types of air maps. The presentation was enjoyed by the 60 who attended and was very informative for anyone with an interest in aviation.

PCUG member John Telek was the lucky winner of the door prize: Flight Simulator 2004 of course! Roger's aircrew included Rod Blackburn and Mike Dinn. Anthony Glenn did a fine job with the projectors, sound, light and interfacing to the ANU AV system. PCUG members Peter Simpson and Allan Hepworth put their compact digital video cameras to good use to record four hours of mini digital videotape.



The foyer crew included Ken Ford and Terry Yan. The PCUG also captured two hours of MP3 from the digital sound stream recording facility of the ANU. All that remains is to edit the raw multimedia onto a Video CD, compatible with DVD players. Those interested in helping in this task (and learning video editing in the process) please contact John Hodge ([hodgej@pcug.org.au](mailto:hodgej@pcug.org.au)).

The PCUG team advanced their collective knowledge about many technical matters in the preparation and presentation of this Air Show. One significant advance was to recording sound from the ANU system onto compact digital videotape. We learned what to do (and what not to do) in driving two separate overhead projectors with video splitters. Although the attempt to record video direct from the VGA line with a video converter was abandoned on the night (we reverted to simply filming the screen), subsequent trials have put this within our ken.

### 3 Flight Simulator 2004

Flight Simulator 2004 is versatile. It can simulate:

- All aircraft types from Wright Flyer to Concord, Tiger Moths to Jet Fighters. All types of aircraft are available at Flight Simulator web sites for free download.
- All types of cockpit; from old analogue to modern 'glass' ones. It can also simulate the interior of aircraft for those who prefer the back seat.
- The wide variety of aircraft characteristics, for example, tricycle or tail-wheel undercarriages and their effect on aircraft handling.
- Accurate global 'ambience' scenery- more detailed scenery can be added and is available on line.
- Viewpoints from the pilots seat, the passengers view, and views from many points outside the aircraft.
- Real world global navigation beacon system.
- Real world instrument landing system.
- A real world GPS satellite navigation system. The PCUG Air show demonstrated the basic Jeppesen black/blue display and examples of the type of moving map displays, including include High and Low Altitude Navigation Charts, Visual Terminal Charts, and World Series 1:1,000,000 visual navigation charts.

For further information about Flight Simulator 2004, email Roger Lowery at [bandrflowery@optusnet.com.au](mailto:bandrflowery@optusnet.com.au)

### 4 References and resources

Microsoft Flight Simulator <http://www.microsoft.com/games/flightsimulator>

Best site, but try off-peak USA time <http://www.flightsim.com>

A good Australian site is <http://www.aussim.com.au>

Airports, flight scenery, maps <http://www.vflight.org/> and related sites

Cockpit, weather, and airplane <http://www.fscentral.com/flsi20ceoffl.html>

Lago scenery simulation (Venice, Pisa) <http://www.lagoonline.com/eng/prodotti/pdt.asp?id=100042>

FS 2002 freeware scenery list <http://walhalla.mine.nu/fs2002.php>

Fly Away Simulation aircraft downloads <http://flyawaysimulation.com/article-topic-13.html>

Simworld - Flugsimulation <http://www.flightsimulator.de/>

## Thanks to John Saxon, you can view the PCUG connection Procedures:

<http://www.tip.net.au/connect>

Here are some procedures for setting up various operating systems to connect to the Canberra PC User's Group Internet system. The procedures include both dial-up (Modem) systems or Broadband (Via TransACT). ADSL is not covered. Each procedure is complete for easy printing. Procedure for Modem Installation and other items can be found in the trouble shooting procedures.

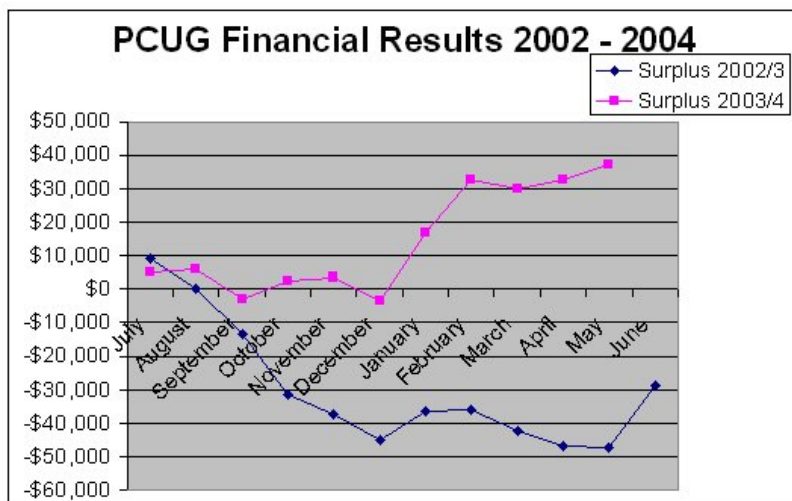
## PCUG Financial Report

The Treasurer reported to the Committee in June that for the first time in many years the financial affairs of the PCUG were in good shape.

The Committee has only achieved this happy position as a result of much hard work. Some of the changes the Committee, with the help of a small number of hard working volunteers, has made over the past year are -

- Reduced the charges for dial-up Internet subscribers by 22%;
- Reduced the charges for broadband Internet subscribers by 7%;
- Made the PCUG Internet Service better value for money -
  1. Increased mailbox and homepage quotas for paying subscribers only - The size of email mailboxes increased from a normal quota of 2MB (maximum allowed 10MB) to 25MB (maximum allowed 55MB). The size of the disk space available for Users private web sites has been increased from 10MB (maximum 11MB) to 50MB (maximum 55MB). (limited access members remain as 10/11MB, 2/10MB).
  2. Provide for paying subscribers up to five email aliases at no extra cost.
  3. Increased download quota per month for BB subscribers from 400 Mb to 500 Mb (25% increase).
  4. Increased download quotas for dial-up subscribers from 4,000 Mb per year to 6,000 per year (50% increase).
  5. Increased monthly hours for dial-up subscribers from 25 to 30 hours, at no increase in cost.
  6. The Acceptable Use Policy, which had remained unchanged since 1997, has been replaced by an updated Conditions of Service.
    - Added to the range of Internet Service options for members access to Broadband Internet using the ADSL protocol.
    - Actively promoted the hiring-out the training-room, with the prospect of it becoming a net source of income rather than a net cost.
    - Stopped the very expensive publication of the 16-Bits Magazine by printing and posting, and replaced it by an electronic newsletter which is increasingly valued by the membership and grows better - including more interesting - with each issue.
    - Re-established main monthly meetings as events which are popular, welcomed, draw the numbers and are effective in gaining new and renewing members.
    - Arranged for the PCUG Centre to be staffed seven days a week, so increasing its usefulness to members.
    - Established a special-use equipment area in the PCUG Centre (at some considerable cost) which is proving a great attraction and is lifting our stocks with the membership.
    - Negotiated a PCUG stall at computer fairs, at no cost to PCUG, and staffed it in ways which are effective and show a highly-visible presence;
    - Identified criteria and considerations for partnerships with other clubs generally which will stand us in good stead in a range of possible negotiations in the times ahead;
    - Began discussion about particular partnerships which may have early benefits for us;

A summary of the financial results of the overall operations of PCUG over the past two years is shown as cumulative financial surpluses month by month.



Your Committee is confident that the financial position of PCUG is sound and we are well placed to expand the services to members in the coming year.

Prepared by the Treasurer

13 June 2004

### CHEAPER INTERNET SERVICE

PCUG Internet Service charges for dial-up Full Service users are now -

- Pay in Advance for 12 Months or 360 hours on line (which ever comes first) - \$119.00 (\$9.92 per month)
- Pay in Advance for 6 Months (or 180 hours on line (which ever comes first) - \$69.00 (\$11.50 per month)
- Pay in Advance for 3 Months (or 90 hours on line (which ever comes first) - \$39.00 (\$13.00 per month).

Broadband service via TransACT charges are as follows -

- Pay in Advance for 12 months or 6,000 Mb downloaded (which ever comes first) - \$280.00 (\$23.33 per month)
- Pay in Advance for 6 Months or 3,000 Mb downloaded (which ever comes first) - \$145.00 (\$24.17 per month)
- Pay in Advance for 3 Months (or 1,500 Mb downloaded (which ever comes first) - \$75.00 (\$25.00 per month)

Members are encouraged to take advantage of these very competitive prices with the assurance that they will never pay excess charges and when internet prices come down further they will again benefit.

### Problems Logging into the Internet Service?

**If you ever find yourself failing to log in to TIP, STOP and don't waste any more money trying to dial in again. The two major reasons for failing to login are firstly, you have run out of TIP or PCUG membership, or secondly, your Username and or your Password have become corrupt. Paying more money fixes the first problem, re-typing your Username and Password into the Log In dialogue fixes the second problem 99% of the time. If neither of those fixes works for you then telephone the PCUG Centre and ask for help (unless you can access someone elses email, in which case send an email to <help@tip.net.au>.**



**now that's clever**

Using TransACT for Broadband?  
Connect through PCUG.

"Minimum payment \$75 for three months or 1500 MB."

# Why Windows is a security nightmare

By Usman Latif

Comment

May 22, 2004

Security in all mainstream operating systems is non-existent; however, things are especially bad for Windows. Windows happens to be the favourite target of worm and virus writers. Conventional wisdom suggests that the huge installed base of Windows helps spread the worms and viruses, and also makes it a highly attractive target for worm/virus writers. The installed base certainly has an undeniable effect on the prevalence of malware on Windows, but this is not all there is to it.

Worms and viruses are so stunningly effective on Windows only because Windows provides some atrocious functionality which makes it easy for worms to strike. It might seem counterintuitive but Windows Registry, and a misdesigned Windows Update are the primary culprits that create a hospitable environment for worms and other malware.

A typical Windows system follows a simple lifecycle: it starts out with a clean installation, which gradually deteriorates as programs are installed, and uninstalled. Eventually, the registry accumulates so much crud that the user is forced to do a clean install. When a user does a clean install that user's system loses all the previously applied security updates, and becomes a sitting duck for worms and other malware.

Things wouldn't be so bad if the user was able to update the new system with security patches painlessly, but Windows Update makes it very hard to do so. My personal experience with the killer duo is an enlightening example of how all of this works.

I purchased a Thinkpad X21 with Windows 2000 Professional in January 2002, and since then I have gone through three clean install cycles. After the second cycle I decided to stick with a deteriorating installation no matter what happened.

As expected, pretty quickly the registry started accumulating all sorts of rubbish, and the system started exhibiting strange bugs. First, Mozilla stopped working; reinstallations, uninstallations, upgrades did not resolve the problem, so I switched to Opera.

A few months later Windows Explorer started to hang when right clicking on folders. I did my best to search for a solution to this problem on the internet, but never managed to find one. Resigned, I eventually learned to avoid right clicks on folders, and became adept at killing and reinvoking the explorer process after an inadvertent forbidden click.

Then I made the mistake of installing the 30-day demo of VMWare on my system. As soon as I booted Linux under it as a guest OS, the sound card went bonkers and started producing high-pitched screeching sounds. I tried reboots which didn't solve the problem; as a last resort I uninstalled VMWare but that didn't do any good either. This forced me to lower the volume of the speakers to muffle the screeching, but I continued using the same set-up.

Finally, I had the bright idea of downloading a registry cleaner to fix things. The product I downloaded turned out to be some pathetic crippleware, and I uninstalled it. Well, that was the fatal fatal mistake; the next time I rebooted, Windows refused to load. Safe mode, last known good configuration, etc., all failed, and so I was forced to do a clean install.

As expected the clean install took care of the bugs. However, it also got rid of all the security updates. I immediately connected to Windows Update to download the service packs, and the critical updates. Rather quickly I was welcomed by [Messenger Service spam](#). This was only a minor inconvenience as I knew how to turn it off; however, within a short while I got a message from Windows saying that svchost.exe had crashed: the [Blaster worm](#) had struck.

The Blaster worm attacks Windows XP and Win2K systems. In order to infect a system the worm needs to send the correct payload for the respective OS. The worm is not able to differentiate between the XP and Win2K so it randomly guesses the OS type; however, if it guesses wrong the RPC service crashes, and Windows reports it as a crash of svchost. The Blaster attack was quite a surprise as the major outbreak of the worm occurred back in August 2003, and I was expecting that the worm would not affect recent versions of Windows.

I was in no position to do anything about the Blaster attack, so I continued downloading the 35 MB service pack 4 over my dial-up connection. It took me a couple of hours to download it, but Windows Update refused to install it; Windows Update probably needed some functionality provided by the crashed svchost.exe.

I rebooted and connected to the internet, which was a mistake as I was giving the worm a second chance to

infect my system. Anyway, I proceeded to Windows Update, and tried the same download again. Alas, Windows Update had forgotten all about the 35 MB it had downloaded previously, and started downloading the same stuff all over again. Worse, the Blaster worm crashed svchost again, and I had to discontinue the download. I knew about the existence of a standalone security update to patch the vulnerability Blaster exploits, so I decided to bypass Windows Update and download it directly. The download was small less than 1MB, but as soon as I tried running it I learned that it requires at least service pack 2 to install, which I didn't have. Microsoft provides a separate download for service packs as well, and I decided to download the latest service pack, service pack 4. Well, the standalone service pack 4 distribution turned out to be a mammoth 129 MB download. This is about the maximum I have ever downloaded over a dial-up connection; a download of this size can easily take 10 or more hours to complete. Downloading a large file over dial-up requires the ability to resume downloads which Internet Explorer does not provide, so I downloaded Wget to acquire that ability. Wget is a commandline tool and is invoked by calling it with the URL name. I tried pasting the URL on the command line, but it turns out that the cut and paste functionality disappears after a Blaster attack, so I was forced to manually type the URL. Normally, typing a URL is not a big deal. Everyone types URLs all the time, and I do too, but I do mind typing gibberish strings of 95 characters like the following:  
`http://download.microsoft.com/download/E/6/A/E6A04295-D2A8-40D0-A0C5-241BFECD095E/W2KSP4_EN.EXE`

To cut a long story short I managed to download and install the service pack, and the Blaster security update. Finally, the Windows Update started working and after another 30-40 MB of downloads, and three or so reboots, I managed to installed the 18 security updates available there (another five have been added to that number as of now).

After this experience I cannot help but laugh at the 'useability' problems Windows users are reporting about GNOME and KDE. It has become pretty clear to me that Windows users are so accustomed to usability problems that they don't even recognise them as useability problems. But, as soon as these people move to a different environment they start complaining simply because the new environment does not replicate the features and bugs of Windows exactly.

The other big lesson from all this is that most Windows users are incapable of "securing" their systems. This is precisely why an unprotected system gets attacked in a matter of seconds, and spammers are still sending out Messenger service spam. Worse, Microsoft is directly responsible for this state of affairs. Windows encourage users to reinstall it every once in a while, and when they do, Windows Update actively prevents users from updating their systems.

The whole idea of Windows Update is a joke. Using an unreliable and insecure network as the primary means of distributing security updates is simply idiotic. This is like asking people to walk through a minefield to get to a shelter. I was able to download security updates off the internet only because the current generation of worms are not particularly malicious; they are just minor irritants.

If Microsoft is serious about Windows security it needs to fix Windows Update, and get rid of the damned registry for good. Unfortunately, Microsoft's approach is to layer half-baked fixes over utterly broken things to keep them going for as long as possible. Microsoft knows that there is a problem with the registry, but the way it is dealing with it is by offering registry rollbacks, and similar worthless functionality.

I did a search on Google for "System Restore Does Not Work" and as anticipated there are plenty of complaints about XP's System Restore functionality. Furthermore, such approaches - even if they somehow became reliable - would still not work. There is a very simple reason for this - users cannot reliably associate the problems they are experiencing with changes in the Registry. For instance, if svchost crashes how is a user to know whether changes in the Registry caused it or a worm caused it? The extra functionality is likely to lead to futile rollbacks and additional frustration for the users.

The upcoming SP2 update for Windows XP is another good example of a clueless fix. According to the reports I have read SP2 will enable the XP firewall by default, and will also include many nifty features to protect the system. It is pretty obvious that such updates cannot work in the presence of the Windows Registry. Windows users who install any kind of software will sooner or later be forced to downgrade because of Registry problems, and when they do they will get fried.

I am not saying Microsoft should not do what is doing, but it should focus on the more important things first. For the short term the correct approach is to fix Windows Update so that users aren't forced to connect to a network to get security updates. Windows Update should encourage users to create a Windows Update CD that contains all the security updates the user has downloaded so far. The CD should contain a setup routine that is capable of

installing all the updates in an automated fashion without requiring user intervention. Inevitably, when the user downgrades he/she can use that CD to update the system, and then connect to a network to download any further updates. Such a CD should be shareable amongst users, so that if someone doesn't have an update CD, he/she can simply get one from a friend or an acquaintance.

Actually, Microsoft does offer a [security update CD](#), and is willing to ship it to customers free of charge. But, as always Microsoft has made a mockery of a decent idea. First of all, 2-4 weeks are needed to deliver the CD. Then there is the problem of availability, the CD is not available everywhere (I live in Pakistan, and the CD is not available for Pakistan). Also, the CD Microsoft is offering is horribly out of date. There is no fix for this last problem, if Microsoft starts updating the CD every other week, then people will start asking for a new CD every other week. Obviously, shipping a CD to every customer every few weeks is quite an expense, and Microsoft doesn't want that. So, the Microsoft Update CD is there just for moral support.

Overall, Microsoft is flat-out confused about how to deal with Windows security problems. The recent decision to [disallow](#) pirates access to Windows XP SP2 is another action reflective of that confusion. I can't understand why Microsoft is so jittery about supporting pirates. Microsoft's paying customers are suffering because of insecure Windows systems; therefore, Microsoft's first priority should be to get the worm infected systems fixed. If this requires distributing security updates to pirates, so be it.

Microsoft really needs to look beyond short-term remedies to solve security problems. The company has to move away from its Windows roots in order to create a secure operating system environment. Microsoft has a huge research and development budget, and it just doesn't make sense why it cannot develop a security-centred OS.

*Usman Latif is an IT professional based in Pakistan. This article first appeared on his [website](#) and is reproduced with permission. Copyright rests with the author.*

### **Windows Security Update CD Free from Microsoft**

Microsoft is offering a Windows Security Update CD-ROM that includes most of the critical updates for Windows 98 (first and second editions), Windows Millennium Edition (ME), Windows 2000, and Windows XP. The CD includes all of the critical updates released up to October 15, 2003. There is no charge for the CD - not even a shipping charge. You can order it by going to <http://www.microsoft.com/asia/default.asp>.

I recommend you order the CD if you are using any of the ` operating systems that it covers, even if you have regularly installed the updates. If you already have the updates, it will save you time and trouble if you ever have to reinstall Windows. If you have not kept pace with the updates, by all means get the CD and install the appropriate ones for your operating system.

Please note that the CD does not include any updates issued after October 15 of last year. There have been a number of them. Therefore, if you have been keeping up with the Windows critical updates, please continue to do so. If you have not installed any of the updates, I suggest that you wait until you get the CD, install the appropriate updates, then go to the Windows Update Web page and get the ones that you don't already have.

*Editors Note: Thanks to Noel Matthews for providing this article*

### **Like to See Old Copies of Sixteen Bits?**

Members who would like to see some of the back issues of the PCUG Award Winning Magazine Sixteen Bits can now do so. Just go to this web site and follow the prompts -

<http://www.pcug.org.au/16bits/index.html>>. If that does not work for some reason, go to the PCUG Home Page and then to Services - then click on the Sixteen Bits line - that will take you to the same place.

Most old issues of Sixteen Bits are available in the web site in a form that allows navigation to the page you want. All the copies of the Newsletters that have been circulated electronically are also available.

Some issues are missing. If any member has an electronic copy of any of the missing issues, we would appreciate receiving a copy - please send to the Treasurer at [pcug.treasurer@pcug.org.au](mailto:pcug.treasurer@pcug.org.au)>.

## Local newsgroups on TIP

A number of local newsgroups are available on the TIP news server for the benefit and use of TIP members. The names and purpose of each group are outlined below.

<[tip.announce](mailto:tip.announce@tip.net.au)"news:tip.announce">[tip.announce](mailto:tip.announce@tip.net.au) Official announcements from the Internet Project Management Committee (IPMC), TIP Administration, the PCUG and AUUG Committees and other important announcements. This is a moderated newsgroup, which means that all postings to this newsgroup must be approved by the moderator before they are published.

If you subscribe to no other tip.\* newsgroups, PLEASE subscribe to tip.announce!

<[tip.general](mailto:tip.general@tip.net.au)"news:tip.general">[tip.general](mailto:tip.general@tip.net.au) Anything of general interest to TIP users. Examples might be questions about TIP pricing, connection policy, or tips on how to get the latest software, good places to surf the net, new software that others might be interested in.

<[tip.help](mailto:tip.help@tip.net.au)"news:tip.help">[tip.help](mailto:tip.help@tip.net.au) Questions (and hopefully answers) relating to using TIP, Internet connectivity and the Internet in general, problems with personal computers (hardware and software) and so on.

Please be aware that the tip.help newsgroup is completely separate from the TIP Help email alias ([help@tip.net.au](mailto:help@tip.net.au)). The email alias should ONLY be used for urgent TIP-specific problems, and only when a personal reply is needed, instead of a general reply that may be useful to others.

Please DON'T post to tip.help AND send email to the help alias - one or the other, but not both!

<[tip.pcug](mailto:tip.pcug@tip.net.au)"news:tip.pcug">[tip.pcug](mailto:tip.pcug@tip.net.au) Discussion of PCUG affairs other than TIP, particularly member services, voluntarism, group management, etc.

<[tip.coffee-chat](mailto:tip.coffee-chat@tip.net.au)"news:tip.coffee-chat">[tip.coffee-chat](mailto:tip.coffee-chat@tip.net.au) Discussion and announcements related to the Coffee 'n' Chat special interest group (SIG), and anyone else who's vaguely interested in relaxed conversation on a wide variety of subjects.

<[tip.test](mailto:tip.test@tip.net.au)"news:tip.test">[tip.test](mailto:tip.test@tip.net.au) THE place to test your newsreader, see what your signature looks like, and play with newsreader options without annoying the TIP populace.

Thanks to Noel Mathews for compiling this list.

## More spam solutions and the dangers of ISP intervention @ More spam solutions

A whole bunch of readers took me to task after the last issue, rousing on me for not mentioning their favorite spam blocker and for focusing on a solution which works only with Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express (the two e-mail programs used by around 90% of the population).

I thought I'd made it clear that there is no single spam solution, that what works for me may not work for you, and that having a clear assessment of your own needs is the best way to winnow out spam blockers which may not work for you.

I musta bin too obscure, because clearly these points did not get through to a whole group of readers.

So, to show you just how individual -- not to say idiosyncratic -- a choice an anti-spam solution is, let me share with you the comments of the rest of the WEE team. Each one of us uses a completely different solution, for completely different reasons, and with varied success rates. Some of what we have to say may even seem contradictory, unless you keep in mind that a solution which works for one person (such as Outlook's Junk E-mail filter) may prove useless for someone else).

(Note: We'll focus on some of the other anti-spam solutions -- including solutions for non-Microsoft email clients -- in the next issue.)

Phil: I get about 200-220 emails a day in total, with lots of mailing list subscriptions, and typically 90-100 of my emails are spam. I use Outlook 2003 with the Junk-email option set to High.

The result is that I typically get about 90-100 messages in the Junk-email folder, and it's been a very long time since I found a genuine personal message to me in there, though about once a week a message from a mailing-list gets caught in there. My Inbox gets about 3-4 spam messages a day left in it.

Overall, I'm delighted with this result of OL2003.

The specific difficulties I have with spam are when I'm on the road and paying high connect costs (sometimes using a mobile phone to connect) and I have to download a whole lot of spam in order to get my real messages. OL2003 does nothing to help with that.

Claude (backroom Web master extraordinaire and software author): My ISP provides Spam Assassin, which I don't use. I wrote my own spam blocker which kills off between 4 and 6 thousand spams per day. Anything that gets past that hits my Vpop <<http://www.pscs.co.uk/products/vpop3/index.php>> (local) spam filter, and, if it gets past that, a request for authorisation to download the email is made. This multi-tiered system has been in place for several years and I'm pretty sure that my youngest daughter hasn't received any offers of penile enlargements :)

Woody (our godhead): Absolutely, no question, hands down, Junk-Out <<http://www.theofficemaven.com/>> is a must-have for Outlook 2002 and 2003.

I've been test-using the built-in Outlook 2003 spam filter and it's a cruel joke, with dozens of Bagle and Netsky generated spams getting through every day.

Peter (investigative journo and globetrotter): My situation isn't typical, naturally. To some extent I need to see spam, at least new types of spam, so I know what to warn Woody's Watch readers about. Also I get a lot of email from readers and companies I've not dealt with before so I can't practically use any system of blocking/challenging unknown senders or people not in my Contacts list.

Therefore I use the Outlook 2003 spam filter at the Low setting. It's not very good and much spam gets past it -- as we predicted back before Office 2003 was released. Spam makers adapt quickly and a slowly evolving system like Outlook 2003 is better than nothing, but not much. The 'block senders' option is also mostly useless because spammers have learnt not to use the same senders address again.

I get around 200 spams a day in addition to those that Outlook does trap. Add to that another 100 failed delivery or virus warnings from systems that have received a message that uses a spoofed email address -- these are a particular nuisance because the sending server should know that the incoming message has a spoofed FROM field and therefore any response will go to the wrong place.

What I would prefer to use is a configurable spam filter at the ISP/Company level -- this would reduce the bandwidth you use to grab email you don't want. But the key is configurable -- configuration should be in multiple parts:

Level of filtering. Low, Medium, High. Preferably a Bayesian filter that is regularly updated.

Delete, Tag or Notify. Option to either delete message, tag them as possible spam and let through to the user or send a short message saying that a possible spam message has been quarantined.

White List. This is vital and often not available. It is essential that any ISP let their customers permit messages from a particular domain or user.

Black List. Similarly, the ISP should let users specify messages to be deleted or quarantined by senders domain or email address.

Black List by TO address. Delete/quarantine messages by TO address gives the option of using temporary addresses for a specific purpose.

Some ISPs have anti-spam systems but they are not usually configurable, the result is email you want that disappears with no trace. Worse still, the ISP delegates the spam blocking to another company (like Brightmail) and then fobs off any complaints to the third party. Often the filtering company refuses to deal with end users and refers the customer back to the ISP -- a great way for both companies to avoid dealing with complaints.

@ The dangers of ISP intervention

Peter's last point about ISPs and the lack of configurability is particularly worth emphasizing.

More and more ISPs are "taking care of spam" on behalf of their customers. But almost without exception, the solutions they offer are woefully inadequate and, in some cases, they make the situation worse rather than better.

Take my ISP, Cox Communications, for example. It's recently been trumpeting its new spam blocking service. Big deal.

Cox's spam 'solution' gives me three choices:



Keep it switched off.

Switch it on and have spam identified with a --SPAM-- subject line and passed through to my email program. Switch it on and have it automatically delete any mail it thinks is spam.

That last option is an invitation to disaster and completely unusable. Opt for it and you are almost guaranteed to lose mail you want delivered to your inbox. I tested the spam service using option 2 and in the first three days it had so frequently mis-categorized legit email as spam that I turned it off. Had I plumped for option 3, all those mis-categorized emails would have been deleted before even reaching me.

The other trouble with option 2 is the marked spam still ends up in my inbox. I have to use rules or filters or my own spam software to shunt it to a junk email folder and get it out of my sight until I can be bothered dealing with it.

Finally, using option 2 doesn't help when I want to check my email on the road via Cox's Web-based webmail service (most ISPs have an equivalent webmail option). I still have to waste time on a slow dial-up connection wading through hundreds of spams (I get around 200-400 a day) to find the real email.

Had Cox provided a simple 4th option -- to mark spam as SPAM but shunt it to an online spam folder, which I could check at my leisure, I might consider trying the service once more. But really, Peter has hit it on the head: None of these services is any good unless you, the user, has control over configuring the service.

We'd be interested to hear from anyone who is truly satisfied with their ISP's anti-spam solution, in particular if your ISP is using a solution which fits all (or most of) Peter's criteria.

#### @ The dangers of ISP intervention, Part II

Speaking of the dangers of handing control over to your ISP (or really, having it wrested from you): As well as offering a puerile anti-spam service, my ISP has taken upon itself to scan all my email for viruses. In so doing, it has broken its whole email system.

Now, let me be clear: I didn't ask Cox to check my email for viruses. After all, I've been using anti-virus software of my own choosing since the early DOS days, and I'm quite happy with taking responsibility for it. But, no, Cox decided I needed this service and I was damn well going to get it.

So, shortly after the company introduced a system of scanning all email for viruses, lo and behold, my email started being delayed. Not for minutes or hours, but for days. One message would get through perfectly, and then two would take 2, 3, 4 or more days to arrive.

Here I am, dealing with deadlines and submissions by email, and I have no way of predicting whether what I send will get through. And no way of knowing what email is not getting through to me when it should. To add insult to injury, Cox sends me a notification email every single time it blocks an infected email, so I get even more senseless email clutter (ALL these infected emails are of the mass mailing sort which come from unknown senders).

Cox assures me it has throttled back the anti-virus software so it is less aggressive in its inspections. Has that helped? No way. I'm still getting email anything from 1 second to 5 days after it is sent. And, from the reports I've heard, a huge number of others are in the same situation.

I don't really mean to pick on Cox. Well, I do, but I don't mean to cast it in the role of sole transgressor -- there are plenty of other ISPs around the world offering similar pseudo-services and making life more frustrating for users.

If you're considering changing ISPs, keep issues such as anti-virus and anti-spam solutions in mind. Such services should be not only configurable but also optional. And if you're unhappy with what your current ISP is offering, let them know, because right now the knee-jerk reaction is for ISPs to take control out of our hands. It's a solution almost as bad as the problems we're combating.

Reproduced with thanks to "Woody's Email Essentials"

Editor: Rose Vines Editor-in-Chief: Peter Deegan Publisher: Woody Leonhard

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#### **No More Give Away Table at PCUG Centre**

The Centre Manager has decided to terminate the Give Away Table at the PCUG Centre.

Members who have computer books or equipment that they no longer need are invited to put an offer of the stuff in the "tip.pcug" newsgroup or submit a short advertisement to the Editor of the Newsletter.

### **Don't Like Spam? Don't Bounce or Respond to Spam Messages!**

Some PCUG members use MailWasher and other similar programs to preview incoming emails. Fine - but some of them use the facility in the MailWasher to bounce those messages they do not want to receive, rather than merely delete from the server.

**Bouncing or Replying to Spam is a Bad Idea!**

Replying to any spam, whether it's with a "remove me from your list" or a faked bounce message such as Mail-washer can send is at best, a waste of peoples time, and at worst, a sure-fire way of getting more spam, or inconveniencing innocent third-parties.

Here is why -

**Scenario 1:** the spammer actually uses their own bona-fide email address as the From: or Reply-To: address.

a) You reply with a "remove me from your list" request. The spammer says to themselves "I've got a live one!", and promptly sells your email address to other spammers and/or spams another million people with offers of CD's containing "confirmed email addresses".

b) You reply with a fake Mailwasher bounce or similar. Spammers send out hundreds of thousands, if not millions of messages per day, each and every day. Do you really think they are going to stop for a minute to remove any addresses, particularly if they are being paid by others for the number of emails sent?

**Scenario 2:** the spammer uses a genuine email address, belonging to an innocent third party, as the From: or Reply-To: address.

Let's say the spammer sends out messages with a From: or Reply-To: address in the mail header of <pcuguser@pcug.org.au>, with an email or website in the body of the message for suckers to reply to or click on. For all the spam to non-existent addresses, the forged address, <pcuguser@pcug.org.au>, is going to get all those bounces. Then, for all the people using Mailwashers fake bounce feature, <pcuguser@pcug.org.au> is going to get all of those fake bounces as well!

**Scenario 3:** the spammer uses a non-existent email address as the From: or Reply-To: address.

Here you have to know something about the Internet's rules for handling non-deliverable email, which will go something like this ... for spam that is sent to non-existent recipient addresses, it will be bounced back to the spammers ISP, which in turn will bounce it back to the recipients postmaster. For spam that is sent to recipient addresses that exist, if they use Mailwashers fake bounce feature, it will be bounced back to the spammers ISP, which in turn will bounce it back to the recipients postmaster.

So, put that in the context of TIP: if a spammer sends email to <pcuguser@pcug.org.au>, and <pcuguser@pcug.org.au> bounces it back with Mailwashers fake bounce feature, then in turn it will get bounced back to the TIP postmasters mailbox.

Our TIP Postmasters get enough spam without any additional Mailwasher fake bounces, so all that is achieved is to waste their time and upset them. In short, the Mailwasher fake bounce feature is a marketing gimmick, with no useful purpose.

Rather than have our members waste their time, and have the time of our Postmasters wasted by these messages filling up the Postmasters' mailboxes, all such fake bounces are now blocked by the TIP mail servers. If you persist in bouncing spam messages you will now receive the following error msg from TIP "Could not send - the SMTP server replied: 5.0.0 Please stop filling the TIP postmasters mail box with fake bounces (SMTP server error 533)"

So please stop wasting time and overloading the PCUG servers with rubbish emails.

### **Office XP Service Pack 3 Warning by Robert Simanski**

This is a warning to all users of . Microsoft Office XP Two respected e-mail newsletters, Brian's Buzz, written by Brian Livingston, formerly of InfoWorld Magazine, and Woody's Office Watch, published by well known author Woody Leonhard, have published warnings about Office XP Service Pack 3 (SP3), released by Microsoft on March 9.

Service packs normally contain collections of security and bug fixes as well as minor enhancements. They offer a convenient way for users to bring their programs up-to-date quickly. This service pack should not be confused

with the service packs for Windows XP, the operating system. A new service pack for Windows XP is due to be released within the next few months.

Livingston advises:

"I do not recommend that you install Office XP SP3 unless you examine the issues described below, and carefully test the service pack on a noncritical machine that's running your particular suite of applications."

Apparently Office XP Service Pack 3 "breaks" certain other programs, including some add-ins to the Office applications themselves. According to Livingston, they include:

- ActiveX applications (uninstall them, unless fixes are available)
- NewsGator
- Norton AntiSpam (run LiveUpdate)
- SpamNet
- IHateSpam
- Palm Hotsync (upgrade to version 4.1.0 or higher)
- Word e mail macros and Acrobat add-in for Word (rename or remove them, or don't use Word as your e-mail editor)
- Some Word templates, such as PalmApp.dot (remove from Word's startup folder)

For more information, see the following Microsoft Knowledge Base article:

<http://support.microsoft.com/?scid=kb;en-us;838871>

And other problems reported by Livingston or his readers: -

- Under certain scenarios, Service Pack 3 will not install if Service Packs 1 and 2 have already been installed. To determine whether you have any of the service packs installed, open any Office XP application, such as Word, click on Help, and select About. If a service pack has already been installed, you will see this stated in the version information, such as "Microsoft Word 2002 Service Pack 1." For further information about this problem, see the following Microsoft Knowledge Base article: <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?kbid=837826>
- Service Pack 3 causes dialog boxes to pop up incessantly, especially in Outlook.
- Mail-merging in Word spawns database warnings. For more information, see the following Microsoft Knowledge Base article: <http://support.microsoft.com/?scid=kb;en-us;825765>. That article includes instructions for adding a key to the Windows Registry in order to fix the problem. Livingston points out, however, that there is an error in the article: - "Where the description shows "11.0" in the Registry branch, the number should be "10.0."

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## **Migrating to Windows XP**

**By Robert Simanski**

Any time you make a transition from one operating system to another, you run the risk of opening a can of worms. If you are migrating from Windows 98 or ME to Windows XP, for example, there are bound to be some incompatibilities with existing hardware and software, especially if you are upgrading the operating system on an existing computer. For this reason, I recommend against upgrading unless you have a compelling reason for doing so. Although Windows XP is an improvement over Windows 98, a Windows 98 system, properly configured and maintained, can be acceptably reliable.

If you decide to upgrade an existing system, make sure that you have plenty of free space on your drive and do a "clean" installation. This involves installing Windows XP to its own folders rather than overwriting your existing Windows installation. Doing this eliminates deadwood. Unfortunately, it also requires reinstalling all of your software.

Whether upgrading an existing system or buying a new computer that comes with Windows XP, there are several steps you can take to ease the transition:

1. Download and run the appropriate Windows XP Upgrade Advisor for the version of XP you plan to use. This program checks the hardware and software in your current system and advises you of known compatibility

issues. Your goal should be to eliminate, or at least minimize, the issues before migrating to Windows XP.

For XP Home, go to [www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/howtobuy/upgrading/advisor.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/howtobuy/upgrading/advisor.asp).

For XP Pro, go to [www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/howtobuy/upgrading/advisor.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/howtobuy/upgrading/advisor.asp).

2. Also search the Windows Catalog for hardware and software compatibility information: [www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/howtobuy/upgrading/compat.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/howtobuy/upgrading/compat.asp).

3. Identify the make and model of each piece of hardware that requires a device driver, a software program serving as an interface between the operating system and the device. The device driver translates instructions from the operating system into terms the hardware can understand and also tells the operating system the capabilities of the hardware.

Next, go to the manufacturer's Web site and download the latest Windows XP drivers for your hardware. Even if XP comes with native drivers for the hardware, it's almost always better to use the manufacturer's own drivers.

If buying a new system, you can assume it will come with the necessary drivers for the hardware installed in the system itself. However, you will need new drivers for any existing peripheral devices that will be attached directly to the computer, such as printers, scanners, mouse, or other pointing device, and digital imaging devices such as cameras and camcorders. If upgrading an existing system, you may also need XP drivers for your video, sound, network, and modem controllers, as well as any other controller cards installed in the system.

If the manufacturer does not have XP drivers, check the manufacturer's site or the Windows Upgrade Advisor to see if Windows XP comes with native drivers for the hardware. If neither supplies drivers for a given piece of hardware, you may have to replace it.

4. Upgrade to the latest version of your most important software. Even if your existing version is listed as compatible with XP, the latest version is more likely to be optimized for it. If planning to upgrade the operating system on your current computer, upgrade the software first. If migrating to new computer, install the upgraded software on the new system and leave the older version in place on the existing computer.

5. If you have any software that is known to be incompatible with Windows XP and you are planning to upgrade your existing system, uninstall the incompatible software first.

6. If you have a CD burner in the existing system, copy all of the updates to CD-ROMs and make sure the disks have been finalized so they can be read in any CD-ROM drive. If you don't have a burner, it may be necessary to install the old drive in the new system temporarily in order to transfer the files. Most systems can accommodate at least two hard drives.

7. If migrating to a new system or doing a "clean" installation on an existing system, be sure to copy all of your important working files to removable disks as well. In addition to your working files, consider copying your Favorites and Cookies folders.

8. If you are using Outlook Express for your e-mail, download, install, and run the free program Outlook Express Freebie Backup. After it has backed up your Outlook Express files, burn them to a CD-ROM. You can find the program at: [www.oehelp.com/OEBackup/Default.aspx](http://www.oehelp.com/OEBackup/Default.aspx)

For Outlook, select File > Import and Export > Export to a File. Select Personal Folder File (\*.pst) and follow the prompts. After you have exported the file, burn it to a CD-ROM.

Finally, just to be safe, be sure to back up your Windows address books. Do a search for the following: - \*.wab  
Copy the files to a convenient folder for burning to a CD-ROM.

9. If using Eudora for your email, find the following folder: "C:\Program Files\Qualcomm\Eudora Mail"

If you have installed Eudora on a different drive, substitute the appropriate drive letter.

Copy all of the files with .TOC and .MBX extensions. In addition, copy all of the following folders under the Eudora Mail folder:

- Nickname (this has your address books)
- Sigs (your signatures)
- Stationery (your stationery masters)
- Attach (may contain file attachments that you have received)
- Every folder with an .FOL extension in the folder name (these are your nested mailbox folders)

10. After you have installed your e-mail software on the new system, if you are using Outlook or Outlook Express you can use the Import option on the File menu to import your existing Address Book and mail messages. If you are using Eudora, just highlight the files that you have backed up and copy them to the same folder on the new system.

11. Whatever e-mail program you are using, be sure to write down all of the information necessary to configure

your e-mail accounts on the new system. In Outlook Express, select Tools > Accounts > Mail. Highlight each account in turn and check its properties. In Outlook, click on Tools > E-mail Accounts. On the next page, select the "view or change" option. On the next screen, highlight each account in turn, select Change, and note each setting. In Eudora, select the Personalities pane, highlight each one in turn, select Properties, and note each setting.

#### Files and Settings Transfer Wizard

You can use the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard to move some of your files and settings from your old computer to your new one. However, you will need to start the Wizard from the Windows XP system and both systems must be fully functional.

There are a number of commercial tools that may do more than the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard. However, I am aware of only one, PC Relocator, that will transfer your programs as well. You can find information about it at: [www.eisenworld.com/ProductsHome.asp?Item=2](http://www.eisenworld.com/ProductsHome.asp?Item=2)

My experience with an earlier version, PC Relocator 4, was fairly positive. I would say that at least half of my programs transferred successfully. Because I have a lot of software, this saved me at least a day's worth of work. However, there were some glitches, and in some cases I had to reinstall the software.

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Bob Simanski is the owner of Business Pro Services, Sterling, Virginia. His company offers computer support and publishing services. You can contact Bob at 01 703-404-8665 or [rsimanski@yourpubpio.com](mailto:rsimanski@yourpubpio.com) or visit his Web site at [www.businessproservices.com](http://www.businessproservices.com).

Thanks to Capital PC User Group (USA) • Monitor • May/June 2004

## PCUG Internet Service

**PCUG has recently made more improvements to the PCUG Internet Service**

**Transparent proxying on our internet service has now implemented. This means that you no longer MUST specify a proxy server in your browser configuration. The proxy server will continue to be used for all standard world wide web traffic. Existing configurations will continue to work and there is no need to change them.**

**If a proxy server is configured, that will be used. If none is specified, the TIP system will automatically forward all standard web traffic to our proxy server.**

**The TIP servers are now protected by a firewall. The servers are set up so that any connections initiated from them are OK, but inbound connections are only allowed to certain standard ports.**

**Currently the following ports inbound to all our machines (including members) are blocked:**

**TCP: 69 sunrpc ldap ldaps 135-139 445**

**UDP: tftp sunrpc snmp snmp-trap 2049 ldap ldaps 135-139 445**

**And outbound TCP: 135-139 445**

**The 135-139 range and 445 are to prevent the spread of the recent MS viruses that seem to be still with us.**

**Please send any requests for ports to be "opened" and report any problems to <[help@tip.net.au](mailto:help@tip.net.au)>.**

**Effective the beginning of February we have added six more modems for use by dial-up users, giving our dial-up users access to a total of ninety modems.**

**To subscribe to the PCUG Internet Service contact the PCUG Centre.**

# COMPUTER FAIR

[www.computermarkets.com](http://www.computermarkets.com)

COMPUTER FAIRS NSW

[enquiries@computermarkets.com](mailto:enquiries@computermarkets.com)

MARKET LOCATIONS/DATES:

\*\*Market timings are from 10-2.30pm.  
Entry fee is \$2.50.  
Eftpos/credit cards accepted\*\*

ALPHABETICAL ORDER:

\*\*\*\*\*

Berkeley Stadium (Wollongong)  
Sun 18 July, 22 August

Exhibition Park (Canberra)  
Sat 26 June, 24 July

Gosford Showground  
Sat 19 June, 10 July

Newcastle Basketball Stadium  
Sun 20, 27 June, & 11, 25 July

Old Bus Depot Building  
Sat 3 July, 7 August

Randwick Racecourse, Sydney  
Sun 13 June, 4 July.

Sutherland Basketball Stadium  
Sun 20 June, 11 July

Woden Cit (Canberra)  
Sat 12 June, 17 July.

At a recent computer fair some item of interest were;

LG TFT Monitor \$595

Card reader to take 2.5" HDD \$175 without HDD. This item seem very useful for those travelling as it replaces the need to bun CD's or take a laptop and at a reasonable price. X's Pro Box.

DVD burners continue to reduce in price. The cheapest being \$130.

Hard Drive 80 Gig IDE \$95 SATA \$130  
IDE drives may be scarce by December 2004

Netcom 2.4 G Wireless Router Modem & Firewall \$249

## Jim's Market Tips

1. Explain your needs to the vendor at the markets, including what hardware and software you already have, so that you have a better chance of getting something that will work with what you have. If you do not do this, the vendor might not be willing to take incompatible items back.
2. Carefully examine the box containing your item(s) to make sure that you are getting what you want, because manufacturers who make a series of models use the same box but only mark it (e.g with a red sticker) to distinguish one model from another.
3. Do not immediately buy the first item that meets your specifications at the computer markets; price your item at all of the stalls to ensure that you get best value for money. Tell the stallholder(s) what you want the item for.
4. Get an accurate docket that properly identifies every item that is sold to you. Should the item(s) be faulty this protects you and gives you the proper contact details for following up.

## Newsletter Feedback

Comments, suggestions, feedback or articles for the newsletter can be directed to [editor@pcug.org.au](mailto:editor@pcug.org.au)



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Email pcug.execsec@pcug.org.au  
ABN 94 130 344 129

## A Membership / Internet Service — New Application / Renewal

Title	Given Name	Surname	PCUG Membership Number
Postal Address			Postcode:
Phone (Home)	Phone (Work)	Mobile	Fax
Email address (1)		Email address (2)	
If new Internet application, enter three preferred user ids here, 3 to 8 characters:		If new Internet application, your Security question is:	
1. _____		Your answer is:	
2. _____			
3. _____			

## B) PCUG Membership

(X) Annual Fees (incl. GST)	Fees / year	I would like to ( X one or more)
<input type="checkbox"/> General Member <sup>1</sup>	\$65	<input type="checkbox"/> Become a New Member for ____ years (1 to 3)
<input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner Concession Member <sup>2</sup>	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Renew my Membership for ____ years (1 to 3)
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member <sup>3</sup>	\$170	<input type="checkbox"/> Change my address details as above.

### Notes

- General membership covers all members of a household.
- Concessions apply to full-time students and Social Security pensioners ONLY.  
**CONCESSIONAL RENEWALS MUST INCLUDE PROOF OF ENTITLEMENT.**
- Corporate membership covers up to three nominees. Additional corporate nominees may be added at \$65 each.

## C) Internet Service

<input type="checkbox"/> New Start date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Renew / Upgrade
<input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in PCUG ADSL. Please contact me.	
<input type="checkbox"/> TransACT Broadband	<input type="checkbox"/> TransACT ADSL
Prices below are in addition to TransACT charges.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Months or 1,500 MBytes (minimum) \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> PCUG Dialup Service
<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Months or 3,000 MBytes \$145	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Months or 90 Hours \$39
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Months or 6,000 MBytes \$280	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Months or 180 Hours \$69
	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Months or 360 Hours \$119

## D) Payment

B) PCUG Membership \$ .....

C) Internet Service \$ .....

**TOTAL PAYMENT DUE \$**

<input type="checkbox"/> Cash (only if paying in person at the Centre)	Visa / Bankcard / Mastercard
<input type="checkbox"/> Cheque made out to PC Users Group (ACT) Inc.	Card Number _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	Expiry Date ____ / ____
Name on Card	Signature

Date paid:  
Date database updated:  
EFTPOS Transaction no: