



Sixteen Bits December 2004-January 2005

Welcome to Sixteen Bits online

If you would like to read off-line.

[Click HERE](#) to download (144 KB), unzip to a folder you choose, then double click the **index.htm** file.

If you prefer - [CLICK HERE](#) you can download (347 KB) as a PDF file.

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We hope you enjoy this edition of *Sixteen Bits*. We are always on the lookout for items for the next edition. If you have anything to contribute - please send it to pcug.editor@pcug.org.au. The nominal cut-off date for submissions is the 15th of each month.

All submissions gratefully received. Please send us feedback as to what you might like to see published in your magazine.

For more news of **events to come** - don't forget to check the **PCUG Calendar** at:

<http://www.pcug.org.au/members/calendar/>

CTL-S to Save your file...

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G'day All...

And
a
very



happy Christmas to all - and have a superb 2005. Hopefully we can get this edition out in time for it to be still relevant. Trevor sent me the first cut (combined Dec/Jan edition) on 6th Dec, and I've been dragging the chain ever since - sorry Trevor.....

Frantic committee activity seems to be quite the norm since we were elected. A quick count tells me that I have received 2,040 messages on PCUG business since 1st Oct, but that total includes some that I sent to the committee list - but by no means all. I currently have over 3,200 messages in my 'sent items' folder waiting to be sorted {:-((
So although it may seem that not a lot is happening at times - there is a lot bubbling along under the surface, and that should produce some more benefits to members in the new year.

What is happening about the Centre I hear you ask? As you will see in the Committee meeting minutes for Dec www.pcug.org.au/members/committee/dec04mins.htm Anne Greiner and I met with the landlord and they are keen to resume the training room lease. He also indicated that they would offer us a discount on the main areas if we signed another lease - but that offer turned out to be less than generous. Negotiations continue.

We have made a submission for space in the new Griffin Centre which would be substantially cheaper than the commercial rents in Belconnen - if we are accepted, and the building is not expected to be ready before Sept 2005. Yarralumla is looking very shaky and we have discontinued negotiations with Watson Technology Park. But there may be some other possibilities around. If we stay where we are - we will rebuild the training room setup into the current area.

The PCAuthority magazine offer of a full 12 Months

subscription for \$3.50 a copy (as opposed to \$8.50 in the News agent) finally got off to a slightly shaky start. There were some problems at our end with an invisible link on our main page, and a faulty server at the magazine's 'outsourced' subscription service which inhibited confirmation feedback for a couple of days. These are now fixed - so if you have been hesitating - give it a go by going to our main page at www.pcug.org.au and follow the instructions. You will need your TIP user name and password plus a credit card. If you do not have (or can't remember) your user name and/or password you will need to call the centre. But it's now closed until 10th Jan so you may miss out on a self indulgent Christmas present. It's just occurred to me that if you are willing to give your credit card info over the phone - it might be possible to sign up at our very special rate by calling their subscription number direct. I'll check on Monday and let people know if that is feasible.

As you probably know by now, improving TIP allowances and features is one way that we can improve member benefits without spending too much money. So I'm happy to announce that the increased limits that we implemented during the 3 month trial will now be made permanent. In brief that means 720 Hours per year for \$119 on dial-up, and 1.2 GB per month download for \$20/month (12 month payment rate) on Broadband. Don't forget for broadband - you also have to pay the TransACT charge of \$17.95 per month for a 256 Kbps connection. But at \$37.95 per month total - it's now becoming quite competitive!

But the really good news is that we are now starting **another trial to virtually double everything again!** Dial-up to go to unlimited time (with an 8 hour session limit), and Broadband to 2.4 GB per month. We will also trial an extension of Web space allowance to a massive 100 MB - which must be a record for Canberra...

Unfortunately PCUG-DSL charges and conditions are virtually out of our control, but we have been able to implement some very small changes there.

For more details - checkout Member Services and charges at http://www.pcug.org.au/member_info/services.htm

We also plan to continue with giving every member a full Email account (with limited - our domain only) web access. We hope this will have many benefits, including better communication with our membership, really cheap Email only access from members homes, and easy access to members only information and offers.

We are very lucky to have 'volunteered' Terry Yan to look after the main monthly meetings for a while. Many thanks Terry! To start the ball rolling for 2005 we conducted one of our first on-line polls to find the membership's preference for meeting dates. One of the main problems with Mondays is that most public holidays fall on a Monday. Luckily for us - Tuesdays just beat Mondays in the poll. The other issue is that you need to consult a calendar every month to find the 'last Monday' or Tuesday etc. So we were happy when the first Tuesday won. In all 196 plus members had their say and the results can be found at www.pcuq.org.au/poll/archive.php

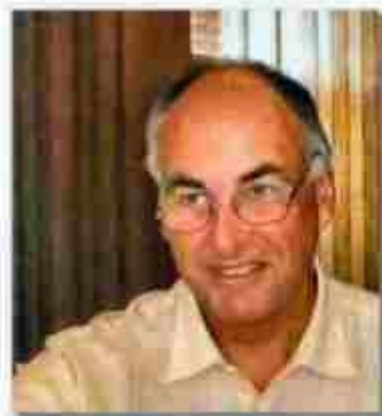
We are searching for better polling software - but there is little doubt in my mind that we will run more quick polls like that one. Thanks to Allan Mikkelsen for setting up that one. Once the University has officially confirmed our booking dates, we will publish them.

Finally (and I've gone on way too long) I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas again and mention that (if you are a real masochist and missed out on my Email net) - you can see what a real cheapskate does at Christmas time with a personal multimedia letter at www.pcuq.org.au/~jsaxon/personal/christmas/xmas04/index.htm or <http://tinyurl.com/62pfe> for short.

John Saxon 18 Dec 2004

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Happy Christmas to all,

Welcome to the December 2004-January 2005 edition of Sixteen Bits. I call it that, out of habit from doing the printed edition, and figures don't look really great on the front

cover of a printed magazine. Should we upgrade our online edition's name to seventeen bits? Maybe something more in keeping with today's computers...

Thanks to LeighD for providing me with his first photo taken with his digital camera. It was taken during a meeting of coffee and chat around July or August.

On looking at the contents of the magazine, you will probably come to the correct opinion that I'm a collector of items provided by other people. I spend most of my time reading newsgroups, rather than browsing web pages.

Obviously, one of the group I read is about freeware applications. Others are the Paint Shop Pro forums. Therefore you'll probably read here, a lot of what I read and re-publish. Like the robot: "we need input".

If you use Internet Explorer as your browser, you won't notice anything much different about the magazine this month, but if you use Mozilla Firefox version .93 or 1.0 you'll see a very light blue background on each page. Last month's page background was light lemon. The backgrounds were not comprised of a graphic.

Now only reason I use Internet Explorer to browse web pages is if I want to use secure Javascript for online banking.

Thankyou to all contributors.

Software Reviews

Reviewed by Terry Bibo

1. [Kleptomania](#)
2. [Better JPEG](#)
3. [Absolute Startup](#)

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Kleptomania

Reviewed by Terry Bibo

For years I have been a passionate supporter of **Printkey**, a utility that enables screen capture of whole screens, windows on the desktop, and content in defined rectangles, with the ability to save and manipulate the capture in a variety of graphic formats. But therein lies its basic deficiency; it is essentially a bitmap output that cannot be manipulated in a text editor or word processor, or searched for content. It is a very useful utility that has its competitors, but none that I have found to equal **Kleptomania**. This is a vastly more useful tool in that it captures both graphics and text, and uses optical character recognition (OCR) technology to render the text readable in a file.

On installation **Kleptomania** reads all installed Windows fonts into its database for recognition. An icon in the system tray gives instant access to the program, and a hotkey can be defined for those who prefer keyboard access. Graphics can be selected by defining them within a rectangle or nominating the window containing them. But that is commonplace. What is not is that text can be selected from almost any program open on the desktop, and copied in readable and searchable format into a text processor. Text can be selected in the normal way by highlighting, or by selecting the window containing it, or more wonderfully by drawing a rectangle around it. Thus a column, or columns, from a spreadsheet or database can be isolated from the parent document. Underlining is recognised, and the output can be in text or Rich Text Format (RTF). Plain text or RTF selections can be appended to previous selections, enabling collation of disparate elements into a single paragraph or document.

When a selection is made a dialog box opens showing the font name, the number of lines, words, and characters selected, and the total of any column of figures. So no longer will you need to open your calculator to sum a few running expenses or intermediate distances for your next holiday. Just select the column with **Kleptomania** for an immediate result.

Readable text is not confined to documents where the input has been directly through the keyboard, and appears in a text, html, or WinWord document. Because it uses OCR, **Kleptomania** captures text from within dialog boxes and popup menus that are, in fact, graphics. I thought this would be a major breakthrough in bypassing the scanner as a means of extracting text from pictures. The digital camera plus **Kleptomania** should give us almost instant results. But Pavel Senatorov, StructuRise CEO, has pointed out that **Kleptomania** cannot and will never extract anything blurred, no matter whether it

comes from a scanner, fax modem, or digital camera. They make pixel-to-pixel exact character images, introducing degrees of inaccuracy. **Kleptomania** makes an exact replica of the characters by a search/compare routine with installed fonts. It has an inherent inability to deal with scans/faxes, but it has the capability of defining text font/size with unprecedented exactness - a feature that cannot be matched by general purpose OCR engines like OmniPage.

Kleptomania's engine is very much smaller than that of a general purpose OCR program. Its strength is that it is many times simpler to write exact comparisons with it .

The program is Internet aware in that selecting web or e-mail addresses allows options to open the browser or e-mail client at that address.

Initially I had difficulty in copying from one of my databases that uses Ariel 10pt with a screen resolution of 1024x768. This was immediately apparent in the copying dialog box, with a random number of characters missing from most words. And I solved the problem by increasing font size temporarily to 12pt. Pavel Senatorov subsequently advised turning off font smooting to improve rendition. This problem was not apparent later on in copying in RTF from a popup menu using Sans Serif 8pt. So be prepared to make small concessions if all is not immediately perfect. At the time of writing **Kleptomania** did not support copying from PDF documents, but that is of small concern since Acrobat Reader itself permits basic copying. It has my enthusiastic support.

Kleptomania Private v. 2.5 costs \$29.95(US), and **Kleptomania** Commercial costs \$49.95. Both programs may be purchased securely online at <http://www.structured.com/>. Site licenses are available. You can download a fully functional, 21-day trial version of **Kleptomania** from the same web site.

The **Kleptomania** engine is also available for developers in the form of Textract SDK (Software Development Kit). Among its users there are probably consultants, managers and developers who are unaware that such an SDK exists, and that it can greatly simplify or assist in the development of their software and hardware integration projects. Textract features can be found at www.structured.com/textract.

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Better JPEG

Reviewed by Terry Bibo

BetterJPEG is a graphics manipulation program that offers superior control over graphic data when editing files. Traditionally JPEG files lose data every time they are edited and resaved, and can develop artefacts that distort and misrepresent elements of the graphic. This occurs because JPEG is a compressed format and each resaved compression sacrifices data to achieve smaller files. This program essentially retains all data when copying, cropping, flipping and rotating images.

Technically JPEG images consist of standard coded units (Minimum Code Units or MCUs) of 8x8, 8x16, or 16x16 pixels, and the program adheres to these units in editing to prevent loss of information. Because of this, rotation can only be by 90 or 180 degrees, and minor corrections to re-establish verticals must be done in an external application. Corrections to hue, saturation, contrast, gamma, and the like must be handled by an external application too. This initially concerned me, but **BetterJPEG** permits copying and pasting to achieve these changes, and when the image is finally resaved it is compared to the original so that blocks that did not change will not be recompressed.

The user interface is the familiar Windows Explorer layout with thumbnail images of graphics in the left pane, and the selected image shown larger size in the right pane where it can be zoomed, cropped, flipped or rotated. Toolbars give immediate access to main commands and subsets of those commands. I was especially impressed with the cropping options:

- Free cropping, fixed aspect, and fixed size.
- Pre-defined and user-defined aspects and sizes in inches, centimetres or pixels.
- Composition guidelines with golden mean, rule-of-thirds or diagonal grids.

All giving a highlighted selection on an otherwise shaded picture.

The top and left of the crop area are always aligned on MCU blocks boundaries to avoid JPEG recompression. These cropping features have to be seen to be understood and appreciated, but I imagine they would have great appeal to members of our Digital Image SIG.

Digital cameras store an enormous amount of information with their images, including date, time, f-number, exposure time, ISO, focal length, etc. This is known as EXIF data, for Exchangeable Image File Format, and is a standard for storing interchange information in image files. Elements of these data, or custom text, can be saved on the image in a font and position of the user's choice as reference material for later times. This could be important if you intend saving the image in another

format, such as PNG or TIFF, where your EXIF data are lost in the transfer.

Undoubtedly there are many competitors to this program, but as an enthusiastic amateur photographer I feel a real appreciation for the features, presentation and friendliness of **BetterJPEG**.

The 30-day trial version is available on-line at <http://www.betterjpeg.com/download.htm> and can be registered for 23.95 US Dollars.

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Absolute StartUp

Reviewed by Terry Bibo 17 Dec 2004

There seems to be a glut of programs such as this on the market now, with more appearing every month. Computer vulnerability is protected primarily by firewalls and anti-virus programs, but another weapon in the war against malicious software is the startup monitor and organiser. Many malicious programs can be surreptitiously added to the startup list and sometimes are disguised under the name of regular Windows system files. I expect to remove up to five from any uncleaned startup group I inspect. A basic but effective program is Mike Lin's Startup.cpl and its associate Startup Monitor that have been around longer than Windows XP. Flight Simulator enthusiasts have a specialised startup program, fsasv111.exe, that is tailored to their requirements but usable by anyone with sufficient computer awareness to set it up to meet their needs. But merely listing startup items and allowing their editing does not address the problem then faced by the user - what programs should be allowed to be loaded here and under what restrictions.

Complex programs like **Absolute StartUp** not only offer advice, but also try to make decision making on these factors both easy and reversible by keeping backups of changes. It is easy to make mistakes and these should not become a permanent detriment to operability. Every worthwhile startup organiser provides the command line, path to the executable program, and relevant registry entry of every startup item. The basic standard is the Windows system file, msconfig.exe that provides a sometimes-cryptic item name, a full command line with parameters, and the location of the registry entry. But it offers no advice or assistance on the validity or integrity of any entry. This must be provided by third party programs drawing on external databases. At the time of writing **Absolute StartUp** had a database in excess of 4000 entries for which it provided descriptions and a suggested level of requirement, broken down to:

- Definitely not required or harmful
- Not required at startup - can be disabled
- User's choice
- Normally leave to run at start-up
- Unknown program - the status of the program is not defined

This database is updated from the web at <http://www.absolutestartup.com/startup/> in the same way we update our anti-virus programs.

Absolute StartUp presentation is very clean and initially allows access to all startup items from various folders, the registry and the Win.ini file, with the ability to add, edit, disable or delete any item. It also continuously monitors registry and startup folders' content to detect changes in startup items and informs you about them, giving you total control over startup configuration. In addition it provides a list of Windows services with a description of each one's startup state and whether it is running, and the System libraries (dynamic-link libraries or DLLs) that are loaded from disk into memory and searched during system startup. This is not an area that many of our users will want to enter, as it really requires a comprehensive understanding of the content. But for system administrators and competent amateurs it is an open door to sensible configuration. **Absolute StartUp** has a refined scheduling option that enables applications to be started on certain days, at a certain time, after another defined application or period of time, or with the establishing of an Internet connection. The selection of any one of these parameters is simplified by drop down lists and is the essence of clarity and simplicity.

The clarity of layout, abundance of features and precise help file make this a recommended program for interested computer novices, while the powerful extra options make it a valuable tool for the professional who also needs to control other users' startup configuration, and to backup all startup items to *.reg and *.bat files.

Absolute StartUp is distributed electronically over the Internet; the trial version is available at <http://www.absolutestartup.com/> for evaluation. The price of a single copy is 29.95 US Dollars. Absolute Startup Home Edition comes without a database support and is priced at 19.95 US Dollars.

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Greeting Cards

It's always good to send cards, but this time of year is really great for sending your Internet connected people hypertext greeting cards.

Download the application here, construct on your computer, then send a card.

*I've downloaded the application, and by the time you read this I'll have sent my family and friends Christmas greetings. Happy holiday period to everyone at the PC Users Group.
Trevor F.*

BestGreetings 4.0: Create and send your own personalised greeting cards, slideshows or multimedia messages with this tool. It features special effects and allows you to add animations, sound, music, voice recordings, and text effects.

Online: <http://www.wiz-technology.com/>

OS: Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2000/XP. License: **Freeware**.
Requirements: N/A.

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Cool Christmas Wallpapers (Favorite)

http://channels.lockergnome.com/windows/archives/20041130_cool_christmas_wallpapers.phtml

The text below is from Chris Pirillo's [Lockergnome](#) - yet another mailing list.
In my opinion, it's really worth joining... TrevorF

"My desktop wasn't looking terribly merry until a few seconds ago.
Someone at InterfaceLIFT posted a Christmas Wallpaper. It's quite jolly. I'm looking for other media fun now... know of any Christmas wallpaper sites I should see and share with all my other Christmastime buddies?

It's much easier to right-click and Save As than it is to string up the lights.
Let's get into the holiday spirit... Yahoo! Images - Christmas wallpaper Lycos Multimedia -..."

Speaking of [Lockergnome](#), you may choose to subscribe to one or more of these:

Windows Fanatics	Linux Fanatics	OS X Fanatics
IT Professionals	Web Developers	Problem Solvers
Tech News Watch	RSS & Atom Tips	Hot Downloads
Exclusive Focus	Bargain Hunter	DVD Deal Center
Technobabble	Game Invasion	Hardware Help
Media Center	Mobile Lifestyle	Net Connections
Search Engineer	Political Geeks	

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Free Anti-Trojan Program

More discussion in the Freeware newsgroup:

I recently updated the A² anti-trojan program and noticed on the startup page the following:
<quote> v1.5.0 License expires 1/1/3000 :) </quote>

Now that's what I call an acceptable trial period.

<http://www.emsisoft.com/en/>

BTW if anyone wants a review of A² this link might be of interest:

<http://www.anti-trojan-software-reviews.com/review-a2.htm>

Stan

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Keyboard Shortcuts

By Trevor Frew

Do your body a favour, take your main hand away from your mouse, and use keyboard shortcuts to select items from the current open window, copy and paste to the keyboard buffer.

Resting one's hand on the mouse pad can often block the blood flow in the wrist, and your hand might well become somewhat numb, like mine did. I received surgery from a neurosurgeon for carpal tunnel syndrome.

Mind you, I've been using a keyboard since age 15 when I began my apprenticeship as a commercial machine typographer in the printing trade. What's that, you ask? A glorified typist who uses a Monotype, **Linotype** or Intertype machine. If you're interested, use Google to scan for Linotype machine.

CTL-A: Highlight all in the current open window.

CTL-B: Make text bold.

CTL-C: Copy to keyboard buffer.

CTL-I: Make text italic.

CTL-V: Paste from your keyboard buffer to the position of the cursor in the window.

CTL-HOME: Moves the cursor to the beginning of the current window.

CTL-ENTER: Inserts Page Break in the current document.

And the most important of them all: CTL-S, to save the current file

SHIFT-ENTER: Insert new line. Note that this is different from the carriage return character which inserts a carriage return AND line feed.

Note that in Microsoft Office the Carriage Return has font, format (italic, bold), and justification information. Pasting from the keyboard buffer to the current document, whether it's Word, Excel, Access, or Power Point.

In my opinion Windows XP Home comes with the best font for text: Palatino Linotype. It's much clearer to read than the boring old Times New Roman. It's much easier to distinguish between

upper case and lowercase l, lowercase i, figure 1 and vertical bar. Zero, upper and lowercase o are much easier to spot, too.

Oddly, this information doesn't always carry over to Microsoft FrontPage.

For further information press F1 for Help. Also, **investigate the language settings in Control Panel.**

Speaking of health, it's a really good idea to get up and **walk around** to exercise one's body.

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Browser Wars update

Last month we were treated to a little discussion from the Coffee and Chat group about browsers, which was the best, and why. I've been using Mozilla Firefox because I like tabbed browsing, and I'd rather see more background and font information than provided by Internet Explorer for Windows XP. Below is something I might try:

GreenBrowser.

TrevorF -- 3 December 2004

From Snapfiles

GreenBrowser - tabbed web browser



[click for full size](#)

GreenBrowser is yet another IE based browser that offers tabbed, multi-page browsing and many additional features including grouped pages, ad filtering, search engine integration, privacy cleaner, form filler and much more. The browser does not require installation, just run it and delete it if you don't like it. The interface is clean and uses many of the standard IE icons, so it should look familiar for most of it. Additional features include download monitor, link lister, proxy settings, popup filter, auto-scrolling and extend support for mouse gestures. GreenBrowser reminds us a little of a cross between myIE and AvantBrowser.

License: Freeware	Our Rating ★★★★★
Price: Free	Popularity <input type="checkbox"/>
Windows:  98/ME/2000/XP	Overall Rank 781
File size: 910 kb	User Opinions Read 4 user opinions
Author: MoreQuick	NEW Rate it!
Version: 2.3	Download it
Last update: Nov 27, 2004	
	version history

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TheFreeSite (Favorite)

http://channels.lockergnome.com/windows/archives/20041201_thefreesite.phtml

They say that the best things in life are free, and this mentality has seeped into our thinking over time. The value of the freebie cannot be underestimated. Some people will do anything within their reach to obtain free items, and from firsthand experience, I can assure you that the majority of these people are certifiably insane.

Hey, there's nothing wrong with getting free stuff, but there's definitely that ever-present grey area. If you act...

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Freeware Discussion Newsgroup

If you run out of things to read on paper and magazines, why not read discussions on newsgroups.

Below are a few items I've read on [alt.comp.freeware]. There are quite a few articles posted each day, and it might take up an hour or two of your time reading queries, and replies.

The ones below are just a few that interested me. The discussions in that newsgroup are much more interesting than those you might find in a technical discussion or "for sale" newsgroup.

TrevorF

Are there any free applications which can make **active links in pdf** documents? I googled and searched in pricelessware.org without positive results.

Tia for any answer, Marc

- *Reply 1:* You'll probably find it here. Freeware and shareware. **Whenever you need PDF** go to <http://zdnet.com>
<http://downloads-zdnet.com.com/3120-20-0.html?qt+=pdf+&tg=dl-2001>
-

The Designer wrote: Are there any programs which enable me to create **online photo albums** easily? Preferably with a good page layout. Thanks.

- *Reply 1:* Assuming you have your own web space, <http://jalbum.net/> is the best.
 - *Reply 2:* I also like JAlbum. But if you use WinXP, Microsoft has an HTML Slide Show creator in their Power Toys.
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.mspx>
 - *Reply 3:* Another excellent one and my favorite is **Gallery Constructor**
<http://www.through-the-lens.net/index.php?page=1>
Give it a try, I think you will like it. It's free for personal use.
 - *Reply 4:* Gallery Constructor looks very nice. I will have to give this a try. Lots of great looking templates (see screenshots on homepage)
<http://www.through-the-lens.net/index.php?page=1>
(I'm always amazed at the cool stuff I find in this newsgroup!)
-

CTL-B to make text bold.

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Tips and Tricks

Video Editing

http://www.mikeshaw.co.uk/edit_general.htm#Adding

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Windows Fanatics

Yet Another Mailing List

Learn a bit more about your operating system's features.
I subscribe to the one mentioned below.
TrevorF

Lockergnome's Windows Fanatics Text Digest

<http://channels.lockergnome.com/windows/>

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File of The Day

Below are two free files of the day

GrabCaptureScreen ([Graphics](#))

http://windows.fileoftheday.com/archives/graphics_grabcapturescreen.html

GrabCaptureScreen is a full featured screen capture program that supports seven different capture modes, as well as fully automatic image saving. You can perform interactive captures, or simply use a keyboard hotkey to capture the area, window, or selection, and automatically save the file to a specified folder (with auto-numbering and prefix). GrabCaptureScreen supports the following capture modes: desktop, single (sub-) window, multi-monitor desktops, alternate monitor desktop, active window, rectangular area, and fixed rectangle. The captures can be saved in different formats, including GIF and JPEG with additional compression and resizing features. Overall, this a very well-designed screen capture tool, with excellent features and an easy-to-use interface.

[2201k] [Win98/2k/XP] [FREE] [SnapFiles]

Anarchy ([Games](#))

http://windows.fileoftheday.com/archives/games_anarchy.html

Saving the world isn't an easy job, but someone has to do it. It wouldn't be so bad if you just had to do it occasionally, but we're repeatedly called upon to save mankind in all of the games that we play. Sometimes you just have to have some me time, you know? In Anarchy, you're required to destroy the enemy's entire ammunition stockpile with a tank. Isn't that really what dreams are made of?

The game requires you to do your work in an allotted time, and if you fail to do so, you'll go bye-bye. Along the way, you'll encounter various obstacles and enemies that will try to hinder your progress, just like in any other game. The game play is rather interesting, and the race against the clock will keep you on your toes. The levels are designed in such a way that you'll have to plan your moves before you make them. When you need a break from the hassles of the day, nothing helps quite like blowing stuff up -- virtually, of course.

[2.07M] [Win9x/2k/XP] [FREE]

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From The Coffee and Chat Email list

Some people may find this exchange of Interest:

CharlieK kicked off with....

We have spoken many times at C&C about start up items as seen in MS Config and what some of them might be.

The Black Viper site has been mentioned as a good source of information, but I have just encountered this site <http://www.sysinfo.org/startupinfo.html> which I think is more comprehensive.

If you click on the word "HERE" about 6 lines from the top you will go straight to a searchable list of possible entries in the start-up list.

It is pretty enormous (over 6,500 entries) so make use of the search facility to find any entries that may be concerning you.

This site also contains a downloadable (and updatable) file of these items so you can keep a list on your machine if you don't have an "always on" internet connection.

A word of warning, check carefully before disabling an item as there can be more than one file with the same name, one of which might be OK and the other might not.

An example on my machine is "nwiz.exe" which is a valid NVIDIA start-up app, but can also be a program installed by a Trojan.

You need to follow the path (and that might mean delving into the Registry) to confirm what the program is actually starting.

~~~~~

**I replied with:**

IMHO Black Viper <http://www.blackviper.com/> is a great site for understanding and manipulating Windows ME and later system \*services\* - those operating system tasks which are buried even deeper than items in the registry start-up (Msconfig) lists.

If you check using 'services.msc' instead of 'msconfig.exe' you will find magnificent lists (over 90 on my standard list - many of which are running - such as cryptographic services, error reporting services etc.). Most of those do not appear on the msconfig list - but some msconfig items appear on the services list.

Obviously there is a lot of scope to disable or change the way that some non-critical services are run - and this is what the Black Viper site aims to do. One day I'll really have to find the time to play with some of that stuff and end up with a lean mean machine. It's a good way to get into trouble although (I think) you can reverse things in safe mode.

I do agree that <http://www.sysinfo.org/startupinfo.html> is a great site for looking up what those strange program names in the msconfig and services lists actually do. I have used it many times in the past.

I have just revisited the site and he's changed it so that it's not really obvious how you get to the main listings. Be sure to click on the [HERE](#) link near the start of the page. The listing is huge and contains many programs, DLLs, etc. that are installed by other programs (apart from the operating system).

Should be in everyone's favourites/bookmarks.

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John Saxon 18 Dec 2004

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## **Centre Dates and Hours**

**To ease the load on our great Centre Staffer Volunteers:**

**The Centre will be open:**

**Monday through Friday from 10 AM 'til 2 PM**

**Weekends from 10 AM 'til 4 PM**

**The Centre will be closed for Christmas from  
Saturday 18th Dec 2004 reopening on Monday  
10th Jan 2005**

**And of course - if you need information like closing dates  
etc. You can always check the Calendar at  
<http://www.pcuq.org.au/members/calendar/>**

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