

Chesapeake PC Users Group, Inc.

THE PRINTER



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BRING YOUR LAPTOP WITH YOU TO THE NEXT MEETING!

Happy New Year Everyone!

I hope everyone had a safe and happy New Year! Let's make 2013 the best year yet!

New Year, New Name?

As the year comes to a close, it has been discussed among the Board of Directors that a refresh of our organization may be needed. To start things off, our name really doesn't reflect the times we are living in. Very few of our meeting topics are actually about PC's and more about technology in general. We will discuss this over the next couple of meetings, but something like Chesapeake Area Technology Society (CATS) came to mind.

Build your new PC

Over the weekend of March 2-3, we are planning to have a PC build at the CRSIG facility in Crownsville. I will publish the suggested specifics for the system via e-mail to those who are interested in building a system. I need to know who is interested in building a system. This is not a 'cheap' build as it will probably cost about \$1000 in parts. I will distribute a sign up list at the January meeting.

TechNet

For those who are interested in a Microsoft TechNet subscription, the subscriptions are available. The cost is \$50 per subscription, which will give you a 2 year subscription to Microsoft TechNet.

Upcoming meeting topics

January 9, 2013 –  Best Buy will have representatives to demonstrate some of the latest technology that you got, or wish you got over the holidays. If you received gift cards, this will give you some ideas what to use them on.

February 13, 2013 – Don Dement will present Adobe Lightroom. Our annual elections for the Board of Directors take place.

March 13, 2013 - We will visit Live Drive and working in the Cloud with Joyce Shue.

April 10, 2013 – Gabe Goldberg from APCUG will stop by.

May 8, 2013 – User Utilities and Show and Tell from everyone! This is the meeting that you should bring your favorites!

As you can see we have a very full agenda over the next few months. I hope to see you all at the upcoming meetings.

Michael

Online Tracking - cont'd

content, or other forms of targeting just as if I still had Firefox open.

Almost all contemporary browsers offer a "Do Not Track" function (also listed as "DNT") in their privacy settings. In theory, this tells websites not to track this particular user; while some websites honor this request, many do not, making this function somewhat dubious in the browsers, but still appropriate to select. Also in the privacy settings are usually displayed the options available for dealing with traditional cookies; the user can reject all cookies or selectively accept some cookies. While it may already exist, and will likely appear in upcoming browser releases, I have not yet seen a browser privacy option that blocks web bugs and LSO cookies.

Since I value my privacy, and primarily use the latest version of Firefox on all of my PC's, I use a variety of utilities to control the placement of tracking cookies, web bugs, and LSO cookies on my computer. A cute little free program called Ghostery (www.ghostery.com) can detect the different varieties of web bugs and web beacons as well as the tracking cookies on any website visited, displaying all of them to the user immediately after opening a webpage, thus allowing the user to take control over what is placed on his computer. Ghostery is available (free) for Firefox, Safari, Chrome, Opera, Internet Explorer, and iOS devices (iPhone and iPad versions). I also use a Firefox add-on BetterPrivacy (addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/betterprivacy) which deletes any LSO or Flash cookies that may have been loaded during a session, automatically deleting them when closing Firefox.

Being aware of the types of privacy issues that may arise from online tracking, and how tracking devices may be used or abused by others, the user can better control who has access to his internet website history, and what they can do with it.



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Who Is Tracking What You Do Online?

by
Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

<https://www.ghostery.com>

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/betterprivacy/>

<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Teens-and-Privacy.aspx>

http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2012/PIP_ParentsTeensAndPrivacy.pdf

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tracking_cookies

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_beacons

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_shared_object

I frequently hear about internet users who always clean all of their cookies citing fears of privacy issues or identity theft. If I ask some of those users “What is an internet cookie?” I receive a variety of replies indicating a multiplicity of definitions varying from somewhat accurate to wildly inaccurate. There is equal misunderstanding about the functions of cookies, and the degree of risk that they pose to the user. When I ask users who faithfully clean their cookies for various reasons, I sometimes ask if they also delete their LSO or “Local Shared Object” cookies as well, which is typically responded to with a blank stare.

Cookies have been around since the early days of the World Wide Web, first used in beta version of Netscape in 1994, and are by default saved by most browsers. According to Wikipedia, “A cookie, also known as an HTTP cookie, web cookie, or browser cookie, is usually a small piece of data sent from a website and stored in a user’s web browser while a user is browsing a website.” These are small text files, not to exceed 4kb in size. By themselves, cookies are inert pieces of data that cannot transmit viruses, and cannot infect the computer with malware. Some cookies are beneficial for the user while other cookies may be used to track the users’ web surfing habits, a major privacy concern.

Some of the good or beneficial cookies are used as shopping carts which temporarily store a list of items being purchased online from a particular website; other beneficial cookies are referred to in the trade as “authentication cookies” which indicate to a website the authenticity of a user often including an encrypted username and password when a user clicks “Remember Me” on a website, allowing the user future access without the need to login. In some cases, if an authentication cookie is not properly encrypted, it can be read by a hacker, which will then give the hacker access to the user’s web account on that particular website; while this has indeed occurred, it is not considered to be a common threat at present due to the security enhancements built into all modern browsers.

The most controversial type of cookie, one that has attracted the ire of regulators in the U.S. and Europe, is the tracking cookie, called by some a “persistent cookie”. Wikipedia describes them as, “... tracking cookies and especially third-party tracking cookies are commonly used as ways to compile long-term records of individuals’ browsing histories. ... Advertising companies use third-party cookies to track a user across multiple sites. In particular, an advertising company can track a user across all pages where it has placed advertising images or web bugs. Knowledge of the pages visited by a user allows the advertising company to target advertisements to the user’s presumed preferences.” Many users actually benefit to some degree by having some tracking cookies on their computers, as the advertisers who financially support the websites that we visit (and keep them free for us) can better and more efficiently target advertising to the user. A recent study by McCann Truth Central covering internet tracking found

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Online Tracking - cont'd

that 69% of respondents surveyed indicated that they believe that they get better discounts and promotions; 42% appreciate the targeted advertising that displays items of interest to them; 32% appreciate the convenience and ease of checkout because sellers already have information on them; and 24% like the fact that these targeted advertisements display items of interest that the users were unaware of. According to McCann, "Folks around the globe are more than willing to share their personal information as long as there's something in it for them. The more the benefits, the more information they'll share." Seven out of 10 of the people asked said they were willing to share their personal information when it meant they had access to promotions and discounts.

There are also inherent risks with tracking cookies, in that they may be used to violate the web surfer's privacy, in that third parties often compensate websites for planting their cookies on users' computers. It is the compilation of the websites visited and unknowingly disclosed to third parties that invokes privacy fears, in that your personal profile is being developed and read by others for a variety of legitimate and illicit purposes. With tracking cookies it is easy to determine many of an individual's demographic characteristics including race, gender, income, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, hobbies and interests, religion, and other facets of life that we prefer to keep private.

Some tracking cookies are sneaky in the way that they are placed on the computer by websites that have been visited. These "web bugs" are also called web beacons, tracking bugs, tags, and other somewhat descriptive names. In order to slip through some forms of browser security, the web bugs are actually a tiny GIF file, consisting of a single pixel (the tiny dots that make up the image on your monitor are pixels or "Picture Elements"). The miniscule images are sometimes called a tracking pixel, pixel tag, or a 1x1 gif. Since browsers are designed to display GIF and other common image formats,

a web bug or GIF image of a single pixel will be virtually invisible to the user when displayed on a web page. Most users are oblivious to the fact that most browsers, again by default, respond to images displayed by transmitting back to the sender of the web bug information culled from the user's browser, including operating system, IP address, and other information that in some cases could also include the user's name. Since almost all email programs support HTML based email, web bugs are frequently used by spammers to report back to them when the recipient of the spam email opens the spam before deleting it. Now the spammer has a confirmation of the target's email address, as well as the ability to gather additional information from the recipient's computer.

Another type of tracking cookie, the one that most internet users are totally unaware of, is the LSO or "Local Shared Objects" which are not the typical text based cookie, or the common variety of web bug, but instead are cookies written in Adobe Flash, which are undetectable by most users and cookie cleaning utilities. According to Wikipedia, "Local shared objects contain data stored by individual websites. With the default settings, the Flash Player does not seek the user's permission to store local shared objects on the hard disk." While the traditional text based cookie is generally limited to 4kb in size, these LSO or flash cookies can be up to 100kb in size, thus capable of storing much more information about the user and the websites visited. Unlike common cookies, which are all connected to a specific browser, the one which wrote them to the hard drive, LSO cookies are independent of the browser, thus can be shared (read) by any browser on the computer. For example, if I receive an LSO cookie while browsing with Firefox, and later open Internet Explorer, the LSO cookies written by Firefox will also be accessible to Internet Explorer. With Internet Explorer open, websites can read the LSO cookies received earlier by Firefox, allowing targeted advertising, dynamic

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Tips for Upgrading to Windows 8

Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

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If you have just upgraded your computer to Windows 8 and are disappointed at the performance, don't blame Microsoft. The problem may be with your computer manufacturer and/or with your upgrade preparation. Here are a few tips to get you on the road to happy computing with Windows 8.

In the past two weeks, I have upgraded three computers from Windows 7 to Windows 8 with a wide variety of results. On the first computer, an older Gateway desktop, the upgrade was seamless and Windows 8 works beautifully.

The second was a very recently purchased Lenovo that was advertised as "Windows 8 ready" and came with the \$15 upgrade to Windows 8 offer. You might expect that this upgrade would be the smoothest, but it was the most problematic. The Windows 8 installation went smoothly and things seemed pretty good until I tried to start Internet Explorer, which refused to work at all. Then I found that the Picture folder wouldn't update and the Epson printer wouldn't work.

A little trouble-shooting was definitely in order. As I delved into the problem, what I found was amazing. The Gateway didn't have any Gateway programs running in the background. But the Lenovo had more than twelve programs that were starting along with the computer and running in the background. These ranged from power management programs to programs that were supposed to speed up the computer to programs that seemed to have little use.

I set out to test each of these programs to see if they were interfering with Windows 8. After several hours of trouble-shooting, the answer was an emphatic "yes". There were two Lenovo programs that were interfering. When I disabled these programs, all the Windows 8 functionality returned. Internet Explorer worked, the pictures updated, and the printer worked.

The aggravating thing was that these programs didn't show up as incompatible

when I ran the Windows 8 Upgrade Advisor in preparation for the upgrade. This computer was supposed to be "Windows 8 Ready". So what happened? Well, many manufacturers load their computer with "stuff" to make them seem better than the competition. The irony is that most consumers don't even know that those "special" programs are there. I never heard of anyone purchasing a Lenovo because it came with such great extra programs.

While Apple products are immune from this because Apple manufacturers both the hardware and the software, most computer manufacturers do this. Smart phone manufacturers do the same.

It is obvious that all of this "stuff" just complicated the computer and can obviously cause problems. Across the board, manufacturers should stop pre-installing all this junk. Since we now live in a world of apps, if a manufacturer wants to give me some free programs that are worthwhile, they should offer this to me in the form of an app that I can choose to install or ignore.

This is one case where I put the blame fully on the shoulders of the manufacturer. I must say that the Gateway really excelled in this endeavor because it was not infested with all of the proprietary programs that the other computer had.

The bottom line is: don't make the mistake of thinking because you have a new computer that was purchased under the \$15 upgrade offer, that it is really "Windows 8 Ready". Before you upgrade, check the manufacturer to see if they have special instructions for getting your computer ready for the update.

While Lenovo's website was pretty useless in this endeavor, I found several other manufacturers had some good instructions.

The next computer that I upgraded was a Toshiba laptop. Toshiba, like Lenovo has a lot of

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Upgrading to Windows 8 - cont'd

proprietary programs running in the background. Toshiba, however, had excellent upgrade instructions on their website. I was told to upgrade the BIOS before installation and to remove several Toshiba programs. With that preparation, the upgrade went smoothly.

I still believe that computer companies should not put so many extra programs on their computers. I actually can feel Microsoft's pain in having to try to deal with a PC ecosystem where this is allowed. In Windows 8, Microsoft produced a good operating system that works fine when other integrated programs don't interfere. Yet, most home users who have problems upgrading to Windows 8 will blame Microsoft and tell everyone that Windows 8 is a terrible program.

If you decide to upgrade to Windows 8, be sure to search the website of your computer manufacturer first. Get your computer ready. See if there is a BIOS update available. Update all the software on your computer, and turn off unnecessary programs that may be running in the background. If there are problems after the upgrade, look at the manufacturer's proprietary software as your first line of trouble-shooting.

Another tip that I can give from my upgrade experiences is that if you are upgrading a laptop, plug it in so you won't run out of battery power during the upgrade. Also, allow yourself enough time. You can speed up the process by using a wired connection, rather than wireless, but you can still expect the upgrade process to take at least two hours. Good luck to all of you upgraders out there! And be sure to let me know how it goes.

What you can do if your mobile phone gets wet

by

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www.mcug.org

Many of you get your mobile phone wet by one way or another. You worry as you mistakenly drop your mobile phone in water. It can also get wet if you are out in a heavy rain. However, there is no need to panic. It is possible to save your wet mobile phone by quickly repairing it. In order to save your mobile phone from water damage, you can consider doing this:

The most important thing you have to do is to act rapidly. Quickly remove all the detachable parts as well as covers possible such as the back cover, battery, the SIM card, memory card etc.

Next, take a piece of cloth or a tissue paper to wipe the excess water you are able to notice within the mobile phone. Make sure that you

dry it completely. If you don't do this, the water inside the mobile phone will begin to evaporate and gather in places which will be difficult to reach.

Take a hairdryer and begin drying the mobile phone while giving more consideration to the place where the battery is located. The battery housing usually consists of tiny holes to let in air (so giving more space for water) inside the mobile phone. It will take several minutes. You may also set your oven to 180 degrees and let it preheat (if you are brave!). Turn it off, open the door and set the phone in it for about half an hour. I have done this but watched it very carefully and the phone survived.

Ed: Having thrown my personal cell phones into the toilet not once but twice, I can give this article 2 Thumbs Up! I've also heard that rice works well as a dessicant. Patience is the key to success.

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Coming Soon: Microsoft Office 2013

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October 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

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“Oh, no,” you say. Not another new version of MS Office, just when you were getting used to the 2007 or 2010 versions. Calm down. This version is both very much the same and very different from previous versions. If you’re comfortable with the newer Office suites, it’s not at all a problem to learn. The main differences are found not as much in the specific programs as in the overall look and purpose of the suite. Office 2013 is designed to be compatible not only with PC’s, but also with the new devices that Microsoft is rolling out, like the Windows phone and its new tablet called Surface. To compete with rivals Google and Apple, Office 2013 is also highly integrated with Microsoft’s cloud area, SkyDrive.

An Office 2013 preview came out in mid-July. The reviews I read from the tech writers were quite positive, which made me decide to download the preview and give it a look. I was immediately impressed with most of the changes that have been made to the programs of the suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc.), some of which will be discussed below, but the overall appearance took some getting used to. They call the new look Metro, which means a cleaner, more modern design. The text on the ribbon is simpler, less ornate than in previous versions. It is easy to hide the ribbon details and toolbars, leaving only the tabs. There is much more white space, giving a less cluttered feel. And if you use Office 2013 on a touch screen device, even more white space opens up for easier touching. I found I could accomplish more in Office 2013 with fewer clicks than in Office 2010..

Besides a cleaner look, the other big focus of the new Office is storing files on the Internet, where they can be accessed from and synced with other devices no matter where you are. This is certainly the future of computing. For example,

the default saving location in Office 2013 is no longer “My Documents,” but SkyDrive. It took just two clicks for me to save a document to my SkyDrive location. If I edit it there, the changes will sync with the same file on my PC.

Another general change is the demise of “add-ins,” which are optional downloads that provide extra features to Office programs, like the International character toolbar. Instead, Office 2013 will offer “apps” from a new Windows Store, much like the app store in Apple’s iTunes. Apps stay on the host website so they can be accessed from any device at any time.

Program changes:

Microsoft got quite a bit of resistance to the ribbon in Office 2007, so changes within the new Office programs have been few, but useful. Here are a few of my favorites:

Word 2013 has added the ability to edit PDF documents, a real time-saver. In versions 2007 and 2010, you could save a document as a PDF, but it was “read only.” If you wanted to edit it, you had to save it as another file type, like a .docx, then re-save as a PDF. Read Mode (different from Reading Layout View) displays a document in landscape orientation (wider than it is tall) and removes all the toolbars and rulers to maximize the reading area. As I know from my iPad experience, this is something especially suited for mobile devices. Another upgrade is the ability to insert online video from within a document. The move to make things simpler for Office users is represented by the new, updated templates found in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. When you open the program, a group of templates appears on the screen, ready to be used. Many more

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Microsoft Office 2013 - cont'd

are available online. One, of course, is a blank document or spreadsheet or slide.

Excel 2013 has a couple of helpful changes. For example, it includes a Recommended Charts button. Selecting a group of data and pressing this button will show a short list of charts best suited to display your type of data. Flash Fill will sense that you are performing repetitive actions and complete them for you, as long as the data is in the same form.

PowerPoint 2013 has new, updated themes. This pleased me because some of the themes had been in existence since the early 90's and had become a bit stale. Another nice upgrade is the Presenter view, where the presenter can see on his laptop not only the projected slide, but a small version of the slide before and after, not visible to the audience. The Zoom feature lets the presenter zoom in on a graphic or text on the screen during a presentation.

The **Outlook 2013** email program can display your Facebook or LinkedIn accounts at the bottom of the screen. The new Peeking feature opens a mini-window as you are composing an email so you can refer to your calendar or contacts list without having to open another program to get information.

All in all, I like Office 2013. Much of what exists in Office 2010 is still there, and the new features helped me complete tasks more efficiently. After a small period of adjustment,

I like the modern look. I have had no trouble saving documents to my SkyDrive area and really appreciate the advantages of accessing files on multiple devices. The one feature that I haven't yet been able to get used to is the change in the Save As window. To save a document to My Documents, I had to go through four clicks: Save As – Computer - Browse – My Documents. If I save to SkyDrive, the clicks are reduced to two: Save As – SkyDrive. Perhaps before the actual Suite is released, that problem might be fixed, or maybe there is an easier way that I have yet to find.

According to Microsoft, Office 2013 will not run on Windows XP or Vista; it will run on Windows 7 and 8, but is designed to integrate best with Windows 8, which itself is advertised as being compatible with mobile devices of all kinds. Windows 8 is scheduled to go on sale October 26, 2012. Office 2013 won't be released for a year or so. It will have several versions for home and business, and claims to have versions compatible with Mac and open-sourced formats. Pricing has not been set. As a reviewer said, "It will cost more than Google Docs, but it has many more features." Anyone can preview the suite by going to <http://www.microsoft.com/office/preview>. Don't be confused. The download will be called Office 365, which is the subscription-based version of Office 2013.

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Watch Free TV and Movies Legally on Your Smart Device

by

Ira Wilsker

I was recently helping a disabled Viet Nam veteran with a not so unusual problem; he wanted to be able to watch live streaming sports events for free. His favorite free streaming live sports website now showed a frightening image stating that the domain had been seized by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) for copyright infringement. Since he was living on his disability income, money was in short supply and the various legitimate subscription websites were beyond his means. The cost to watch all of his favorite football and basketball games that were unavailable on his TV was prohibitive, considering his personal circumstances.

Watch For Free; Legally - cont'd

I did a search of the free streaming sports websites, and while there were several, including NFL.com that displayed videos of past games, I was suspicious of those that offered free streaming of live games, as ICE, along with the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, have been actively seizing domains and servers, and arresting the purveyors engaged in intellectual property theft.

Somewhat discouraged, he asked about getting free TV and movies on his smart device, a gift from his daughter. I showed him the free content on Hulu (hulu.com), and the free full length movies and TV shows on YouTube. While lacking the live broadcast TV shows and sports, they did have the capability of providing countless hours of entertainment without incurring any significant expense.

I later showed him another free streaming service that is explicitly for Apple iOS and Android smart devices, including phones and tablets, which quickly became his favorite source of free online entertainment, TV, and movies; this service is Crackle (crackle.com). Crackle is a free download from the iTunes and Play Google stores. While not as comprehensive as Hulu or YouTube, Crackle does offer a respectable selection of movie and TV titles. The Crackle app for both Apple and Android smart devices has been downloaded over 13 million times. The most recent Android release on October 24, and the Apple release on November 3, incorporated several improvements, enhancements, as well as better video quality. The newest version of Crackle supports HDMI out, if the smart device is so equipped, such that it can play on most modern TVs and other HDMI equipped devices. There are also free versions of Crackle available for the Nook Tablet, Kindle Fire, Windows smart phones, Roku boxes, Playstation 3, and Xbox 360 consoles.

In terms of full length TV shows, Crackle has classics such as All in the Family with the ubiquitous Archie Bunker, Married With Children with Chicago's most famous shoe-man Al Bundy, the acclaimed 1967 series of an imprisoned former

secret agent Patrick McGoohan in The Prisoner, and dozens of other TV series from the U.S. and Japan. The clichéd phrase "Dyno-mite" can be heard on Good Times, while 13 full episodes of Rescue Me dramatizes the life of a post 9/11 New York Firefighter, both available on Crackle. Sanford & Son and The Three Stooges offer a lot of humor on Crackle, but one of the most popular TV series, Seinfeld, is also available on Crackle. Dana Carvey provides Crackle viewers with satirical comedy sketches, while dozens of other TV series complete the full episode TV offerings. The TV offerings on Crackle are dynamic, in that they frequently change with new shoes being added, and some shows cycling off Crackle. A link on the top of the TV page will show the most recently added shows, while some other shows indicate the date that they will be leaving Crackle.

Crackle offers over 300 full length, uncut movies of all genres. As when watching the commercial TV networks, the movies on Crackle are periodically interrupted for a commercial; it is this sponsorship that keeps Crackle free to the user. While many of them are lesser known titles, many were box office successes. Movie fans will recognize Jacqueline Bisset and Robert Shaw in the Bermuda treasure thriller "The Deep", while the camp comedy classic "The Gods Must Be Crazy" dramatizes the effect a Coke bottle can have on a primitive society. Serpent loving horror aficionados may appreciate the nine different Godzilla movies available along with a companion pair of Mothra movies, while zombie followers will appreciate the cult classic "Night of the Living Dead.". Michael Chiklis, currently known for his parts in "The Commish", "The Shield", and "Vegas" plays Curly in the 2000 biography of The Three Stooges, as seen from Moe's perspective.

Crackle also offers 44 different "original series", many with multiple episodes. One humorous but risqué original series is "Crash Comedy", with Charlie Murphy (Eddie Murphy's brother). The popular Las Vegas and television magician Penn Jillette has an original series of 58

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Watch For Free; Legally - cont'd

short but snappy satirical commentaries on controversial subjects in "The Best of Penn Says". Unabashed and often politically incorrect, Penn Jillette leaves no doubts as to where he stands on issues, often injecting comedy and satire into his analyses.

For those willing to put up with the same commercial interruptions as they have on the network channels on their home TV, Crackle is a worthy free app for Android, Apple, and Windows smart devices, including phones and tablets as well Kindle Fire, Nook, Roku, Playstation 2 and Xbox 360. With over 300 full length movies, and over a thousand episodes from dozens of TV series, as well as original content, Crackle is definitely worth a try.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.crackle.com>

<http://www.crackle.com/outreach/platforms>

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/crackle-movies-tv/id377951542?mt=8>

<https://market.android.com/details?id=com.gotv.crackle.handset>

<http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1202/120202indianapolis.htm>

<http://www.hulu.com>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/movies/videos?view=26&sort=dd> (Free Movies)

<http://www.youtube.com/user/YouTubeShowsUS/videos?sort=dd&view=38> (TV Episodes)

Good Enough

by

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September 2012 issue, The Notepad

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I have an iPad and it's great to help keep the grandkids' interest when we go out to eat, or on long drives in the car. But, for long trips such as when we go to San Diego's Sea World I really did not want to take it. It is big to carry and there is the danger of breakage with such trips. So I have been looking at some of the smaller (and cheaper) tablets. I basically just wanted something I could put some

movies on for them and a few games would also help. I saw what I thought would be just right from Buy.com -- a 7" AGPTEK TP10A for \$84. It had the Android 4.0 operating system. The processing speed I knew would not be fast, but it could take a micro-SD card up to 32GB. With that I could put lots of movies and kids TV shows on it.

So I brought it and have been pretty happy with it so far. I made having this tablet into a show and tell by asking members to bring their tablets for the September meeting. I got to see the Google's Nexus 7" tablet and the Asus with keyboard set up, and one other.

Some of the other things about mine - 1080P HD high definition video display, support for AVI, WMV, MP4, MKV, RM, RMVB, FLV, MOV, and 3GP. It even has HDMI output ability.

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I brought an HDMI mini cable, hooked it up, and son-of-a-gun it looked great on a 24" TV.

There is not a lot of volume coming from the little speaker in the back so I bought a portable speaker that plugs into the headphone port. It works well and, of course, the tablet can play the usual music formats. With one front 0.3 Mega pixel camera and MIC you can make video calls.

It's listed as having 8GB, but I did look before buying it and knew it would only have about 512MB of free space with the operating system and apps they put on it. First thing of course was to get Angry Birds on it. The grandson loves it.

There is Wi-Fi built-in it, and I've always said the iPad's Wi-Fi is not very good. I took it to a restaurant with free Wi-Fi and the iPad found three available connections. The AGPTEK found eight, including the coffee house across the street.

Remember the low cost of \$84. I brought the warranty (it will cover me when I take it on trips) for \$13, the Micro-SD card cost \$28, a holder cost \$30 (a very good padded one), the speaker \$9, and finally a HDMI cable was \$9. So I've doubled the initial cost, but it is still far cheaper than other tablets, and it suits my needs. And, most important, the grandkids love it!

A New Windows

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For two decades, Microsoft's Windows operating system has dominated the personal computing landscape. Microsoft's success comes from making computers easier to use, without being tied to one particular computer hardware manufacturer. But, what really makes Windows King of the Hill is that it provides a common experience between users and a common platform for hardware and software developers. This is a quality at odds with multiple versions of Windows being in use, but Windows must nevertheless progress to new versions. And so, Microsoft is releasing a new version of Windows October 26, Windows 8.

Windows 8 is the most secure and stable Windows ever. It is also faster than other versions of Windows in common use, provided you have enough memory. Windows 8 is, in nearly all respects, the best Windows yet. With maybe one exception: Microsoft is introducing a new user interface for the PC, the first new interface since 1995. Microsoft wants a consistent interface across Windows smart phones, tablets, and PCs.

Whether you like the new interface may be a matter of personal preference. If you don't like

it, the old interface is still available.

Now is the time to consider upgrading. Windows 8 improves performance over previous versions of Windows. But, more importantly, support for Windows XP is dwindling. A couple of years ago, Microsoft stopped releasing new versions of their software, such as Internet Explorer, for Windows XP. Windows XP users, and soon Vista users, find their operating system increasingly without support from software and hardware companies. Here, at ICON, we'll soon get to the point where we'll have to focus on Windows 7 and 8.

Windows XP users who upgrade will likely need to upgrade memory as well. But, you might consider a new computer, rather than investing more into an old computer. Computer hardware has come a long way since the days of Windows XP.

Windows Vista users, your computer should run Windows 8 much better than Vista. Go get the upgrade! Window 7 users, upgrade only if you really like that new interface, or if you want the new tablet-like ecosystem Microsoft is going to provide for Windows 8.

The Next Regular Meeting will be at
The Severn River Middle School

Wednesday
January 9th, 2013

Meeting will be held in the large meeting room.

It starts at 7:00 P.M. with club business
and a short discussion period.

You're invited to a presentation

on

New Tech Toys

by

Our Friends at



Members and their friends are welcome to
come, ask questions and become enlightened.

How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and points south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left onto College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Technology SIG, A ChPCUG
Special Interest Group**

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.



1783 Forest Drive #285
Annapolis, MD 21401

FIRST CLASS

INSIDE THIS VERY ISSUE!

President's Corner
Windows 8 Upgrade
Good Enough
Another View on Win 8
Tracking You Online
.... *and a whole bunch more!*

Note: The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (page 2, column 2) to update.

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