

December Newsletter 2008

Vol. 1 No. 12

Well, Christmas is almost upon us. Where did the year go? At our last meeting I shared some of the newsletters and great deals you can get at [www.worldstart.com](http://www.worldstart.com). The last time I was on their website I discovered their weekly "great deals" newsletter. It is sent out every Saturday and has deals that are not available anywhere else. I recently got a USB 4 gig hard drive from them. Yes it's small, but the way my computer hands me surprises I wanted a secure back up for some of my important files. I'll bring it to our December "Pot Luck" meeting.

Dennis Astrubel won our September door prize - a copy of Pinnacle Studio 12 Ultimate. He has made a short movie to share with us this month. Many vendors are partnering with user groups to get reviews of their software. In exchange, the reviewer gets to keep the software for free. There is no requirement as to length, content, or writing ability. The review doesn't have to be published in a major newspaper—our little newsletter will do. All they want is your honest opinion printed somewhere for other computer users to read. Not all programs are available, but if there is something you are interested in and will write about your experience using it, shoot me an email and I will see if I can get it.

In putting this newsletter together I read some stuff on the history of computers and user groups that made me think of the history of SVCG. In the beginning members brought their computers with them. When I joined we were meeting in the band room at the High School. Later we used one of the computer rooms. During summer vacation we had a picnic and a break because the school was closed. The picnic crashing wasps caused us to rethink our summer plans. We also lost our free school access and had to look for a new place to meet. Our partnership with the Library has had many benefits for us and them. A big "Thanks!" to those who work in the library on Fridays! —Beth



#### Smart Computing Tip Of The Day

##### Shop For A DVR

HD DVRs (high-definition digital video recorders) have the extra storage capacity and advanced video outputs you need to record and output HD shows from your cable or satellite provider in all their glory. When shopping for an HD DVR, pay close attention to the number of hours they claim to record because HD recording times are often a fraction of the standard-def recording times. Look for models with large hard drives—500GB or larger is ideal—and buy only a unit that has video outputs that are compatible with the video inputs on your HDTV. HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) or DVI (Digital Video Interface) connections are ideal, although component video will also carry an HD signal. Avoid S-Video and composite connections whenever possible, as they only carry standard-def video signals, even if the content stored on the HD DVR was recorded in HD.

##### HDMI Cables

If you have a digital HDTV and HD output device, we recommend you connect them with an HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) cable. HDMI will carry a digital audio signal and let you enjoy the highest audio and video quality using a single cable.

## Traveling Then and Now - "Technically" Speaking

by Gregory West, Editor for the Sarnia Computer Users' Group [SCUG], Canada  
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(This article was originally published in Sarnia's "FIRST MONDAY" magazine, August 2008 issue)

In 1974 Richard Nixon was the first US President forced to resign, while gasoline pricing rose to a whopping 55 cents a gallon US (14.5 cents a liter). They claim the reason was that "gasoline shortages and price increases throughout the world help to cause problems in most of the western worlds' economies" ([www.thepeoplehistory.com](http://www.thepeoplehistory.com)).

Sound familiar? What isn't familiar is the technology that accompanies us on vacations.

I remember in 1974 driving to Fort Wilderness Disney World, Florida in a Volkswagen van built into a homemade camper, all decked out with plywood beds and a Coleman cooler for a fridge with a never-ending request for ice. CAA supplied the trip tik maps that marked out the route and the construction sections of the highway. We had the best of the best for navigating the trip. As well, we had a brand new Instamatic camera with 7 rolls of 126 film that cost us a small fortune. Our son, four years old, rode a small tricycle back and forth inside the van to while away the hours and hours of monotonous driving as seatbelt legislation was non-existent.

Today, we still face the gas increase excuses and we are well aware of the price of a liter of gasoline today. In that regard, nothing has really changed, only the numbers and the fact that we are all buckled into our seats. Although, one thing that has changed for travelers in 2008: "tech toys"; they have now become a "must have" for every family that does ground travel on vacations.

Our kids have been replaced by grandkids and the Volkswagen homemade camper van is long gone. People today are now hauling RVs of all sorts that host most of the comforts of home.

The CAA maps and my son's tricycle have been replaced by the latest technical and computer gadgets. Let's have a peek at how technology has changed road travel, some 34 years later.



Kids today are buckled tightly into the back seats as airbag protection in the front restricts them to the back seats only. While in the back seat they have the option of viewing DVD movies run through a DVD player onto 2 separate monitors that attach to the head rests of both front seats. They listen to the movies via the vehicle stereo system or individual headphones. When they tire of the movies they can play video games by switching over to their PSP or a PS2 that plugs through the inverter. Of course there is always travel bingo if the tech stuff gets boring, but we won't hold our breath on that one.

For the driver and co-pilot there is a GPS display with voice directions, saving the hassle of trying to read the fine print on wrinkled and torn maps. Many travelers bring along laptops while traveling as their uses are many. For example, you can record your trip's information, download pictures and videos from digital cameras. The big thing these days with computers is reading digital books, or listening to audio books that have been previously downloaded from the Internet. Of

course, when a live Internet connection becomes available (most RV parks have free Wi-Fi) you can check email, use Skype to call home, and re-search the places to see, all from your laptop.

The days of praying that there will be a pay phone nearby if we break down are long gone as many people have both a Canadian and American cell phone. For instance, one can purchase a Motorola TracFone that works only in the USA for under \$10 and buy a "pay-as-you-go" card, making long distant calls back home cheaper and giving one more security on the highways in the USA.

Don't leave without your MP3 player. Podcasts of your favourite shows and lectures can be easily downloaded from the Internet. All MP3 players come with headphones that make for easy listening and do not disturb the other passengers or driver.

Walkie talkies are not a new item while on vacation, but the price certainly has come down and the range has expanded greatly. A quick stop in

the grocery store for supplies will help you utilize your group to ensure precision targeted shopping whereby we all search out different items and meet at the same cashier, thus saving time. The walkie talkie is also used in many other scenarios for security and locating purposes. These units are a must have for anyone traveling with children. The Instamatic camera has been replaced by the digital camera, thus allowing people to take hundreds of pictures during a trip without any real cost. If some of the pictures are not that great they are easily deleted and forgotten without the worry of paying for more film.

An inverter will allow the truck battery to convert power from DC to AC so you can run the laptop while traveling to edit photos, read books, watch movies and connect to Wi-Fi hotspots. This also allows for the use of a PS2 plugged into the truck battery power as if you were at home plugging into a wall outlet. You can even plug in a refrigerated cooler with this inverter, making life just that much easier.

## Computhanksgiving

By Berry F. Phillips, Computer Club of Oklahoma City  
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The Computer Club of Oklahoma City recently celebrated "Thanksgiving in August" at our monthly General Meeting when we celebrated all the members past and present who have given of their time and talents in the evolution of our computer club. As I was preparing for the General Meeting, I thought how far we have come from our humble beginnings in a small house where a few people attended to try to master DOS. Today, the Computer Club of Oklahoma City enjoys a high tech facility complete with a computer lab and is partnered with Senior Net.

The first computer club was the Homebrew Computer Club which had its humble beginnings in a garage in the Silicon Valley in California in March 1975. The club was an informal group of electronic enthusiasts and technically-minded hobbyists who gathered to trade parts, circuits, and information pertaining to computer devices. The club evolved rapidly to a large auditorium. The 1999 made-for-television movie "Pirates of the Silicon Valley" (and the book on which it was based, "Fire in the Valley: The making of the Per-

sonal Computer," describes the role of the Homebrew Computer Club in creating the personal computer. Engineers working on very expensive main frame computers in those days dreamed of developing a personal computer that would be so affordable that almost everyone could have one in their home. The rest of course is technological history.

SeniorNet was founded in 1986 by Doctor Mary Furlong in San Francisco, California and was later moved to Santa Clara, California. Dr. Furlong believed that telecommunications could enhance the lives of older adults. She faced considerable opposition in getting the project funded. The Merkle Foundation realized the potential of the project and funded it based at the University of San Francisco. Five learning centers were opened with twenty seniors, and computers were furnished by Apple Computers. Today SeniorNet has won numerous national awards and has 200 learning centers both nationally and internationally with a membership of approximately 20,000. SeniorNet is the leading technological educator of older adults and has benefited millions of seniors since its inception.

The birth of the personal computer was due to

the development of the microprocessor, a single chip with all the circuitry that formerly occupied large cabinets. The early personal computers were called microcomputers and were sold as electronic kits with programming done by toggle switches and output was provided by front panel indicators such as neon bulbs. One remembers the Altair which you couldn't do much with but was of interests to hobbyists and technicians. Today due to the considerable evolution of the personal computer in 2008, one billion were sold worldwide and a projected two billion by 2014.

I am reminded of the Virginia Slim commercial, "You have come a long way, baby!" I wonder how often do we think of the thousands of our fellow citizens who have been involved with the development as well as the teaching of how to use these amazing technological devices that have so transformed our lives and indeed become a necessity and our very windows to the world? Perhaps, it is time to celebrate together a well deserved "Computhanksgiving."

Happy Thanksgiving from the Computer Club of Oklahoma City.

## Free (Okay, Cheap) Hardware from PCMag.com

www.pcmag.com

Manufacturers of even the most basic devices generally don't give anything away. And you're not likely to find breakneck performance at bargain prices. But it is possible to get fully computerized without spending a fortune. Read on to find the best tech bargains around the Internet.

### DESKTOP



EverexTC2502 gPC  
\$199 street

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

Green or Google, it doesn't matter what the "g" stands for. Just know that

this is the lowest-cost desktop on the market today. Available at Wal-Mart.

Read the full review of the EverexTC2502 gPC.

### MONITOR



Sceptre DCL20A 20" Widescreen LCD  
\$159.99

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

TigerDirect offers the occasional bargain display, such as this 20-inch

screen with \$50 instant rebate.

### LAPTOP



ASUS color Eee PC 2G Surf  
\$299 direct

[asus.com](http://asus.com)

This tiny Linux notebook has just a smudge of a screen (7 inches), but you

won't find a better combination of price and functionality.

### PRINTER



Lexmark Z1300

\$29.99 direct

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

Since it includes an ink cartridge worth \$18.99, the actual price of this compact

color ink jet printer is arguably around \$6. Out of ink? Buy a new printer.

Read the full review of the Lexmark Z1300.

### CAMERA



JAZZ JDC5 QVGA 3-IN-1 Digital Camera

\$10 street

[audio-discounters.com](http://audio-discounters.com)

Small enough to hang on a keychain, this tiny shooter uses a single AAA battery to capture images measuring 352 by 288 pixels.

### MEDIA PLAYER



Coby MP-C833 128MB MP3 Player

\$10 street

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

It plays MP3s and WMA files and has all the music control buttons you'll need, plus it doubles as a USB thumb key for file storage.

### MOBILE PHONE



Motorola C139 from Tracfone

\$14.99 direct

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

It may lack the sex appeal of an iPhone, but the C139 makes calls.

They'll cost you 10 cents per minute, prepaid. Read the full review of the Motorola C139.

### SCANNER



Canon CanoScan LiDE 25

\$49.99 direct

[www.usa.canon.com](http://www.usa.canon.com)

This no-frills, three-button flatbed scans pictures at 1,200 pixels per inch over a slow but workable USB 1.1 connection. Read the full review of the Canon CanoScan LiDE 25.

## !Danger: Music Download!

By Mike Morris, Front Range PC Users Group, Colorado  
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"On September 8, 2003, the recording industry sued 261 American music fans for sharing songs...."

That partial quote is from an Electronic Frontier Foundation article (<http://www.eff.org/wp/riaa-v-people-years-later>) that provides an in-depth description of RIAA (Recording Industry of America) activities, with many references. Lawsuits filed by the RIAA over the past five years have resulted in severe financial hardship to individuals that were targets of RIAA legal action—and some of those defendants claimed that they were not aware that they had violated the law.

Legal consequences for anyone caught in a violation of copyright infringement laws have now increased.

On October 13th, 2008, a new law, the Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property Act was signed that provides new federal enforcement powers and higher penalties for copyright infringement.

For details, see this CNET news story:  
[http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578\\_3-10064527-38.html](http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578_3-10064527-38.html).

Briefly, (from the CNET story<sup>®</sup>—used with permission from CBS Interactive, Inc., copyright 2008, all rights reserved) "...the law consolidates



federal efforts to combat copyright infringement under a new White House cabinet position, the intellectual property enforcement coordinator, who will be appointed by the president. ... The law also steepens penalties for intellectual-property infringement, and increases resources for the Department of Justice to coordinate for federal and state efforts against counterfeiting and piracy. The so-called Pro-IP Act passed unanimously in the Senate last month and received strong bipartisan support in the House."

We often forget that under our legal system, ignorance of the law is no defense. For those readers with family members, friends and acquaintances that are casual computer users, now may be the time for a reminder that, however tempting, free music downloads may result in serious legal problems. And, for any member of those same groups that use the internet as their primary source of music, that reminder may be an absolute necessity.

To paraphrase a different warning, "free music downloads may be injurious to your financial health." You, your family, friends and acquaintances all need to be informed consumers before downloading "free" music or sharing music files.

## Protect Your Identity

By Neil J. Rubenking, [www.PCMag.com](http://www.PCMag.com)

People take risks online with their identity that they'd never dream of taking in the real world; here are twelve tips and three apps that can help you protect your virtual identity with the same vigilance as you do your real-world one.

When you hand your credit card to the waiter at an unfamiliar bistro, there's a possibility he'll copy the number and go on a spree with your card. It's not likely, though – too many chances for him to get caught! Most of us, therefore, don't worry too much about letting a card out of our sight for a short time. But when you give your credit card number or any sort of personal information to a Web site, you're taking a much more serious chance on identity theft. Here are a dozen tips, in

no particular order, to help keep your identity and personal information safe. Finally, check out the links below to three apps that can help ensure that John Smith doesn't become the property of John Q. Public.

- 1. Clam Up.** If a site requires registration, fill in only the required fields. Look closely for at any checkboxes relating to sharing your information – depending on how they're worded you'll need to check or uncheck the box to deny sharing permission.
- 2. Lie.** If the registration isn't part of an important ongoing business relationship, consider filling the required fields with... shall we say... truth-challenged data. Or get ready-made registra-

tion information from [www.bugmenot.com](http://www.bugmenot.com).

3. **Look for the Lock.** The lock symbol in your browser's Status Bar and "https" in the Address Bar show that you've got a secure connection. Look for it any time you're about to engage in a financial transaction. The lock isn't a guarantee of security, but its absence is a guarantee of NO security.
4. **Sniff Out Phish.** If you get an e-mail about a problem with your bank or other financial institution, never click any links. Go directly to the bank's web site and research the problem there. If there is no problem, inform the bank about this fraud attempt.
5. **Sniff Out Phish, II.** Both Internet Explorer 7 and Firefox 2 include built-in detection of fraudulent web sites using a combination of blacklisting and actual web page analysis. Be sure this feature is turned on, and take it seriously.
6. **Search Safely.** For additional help avoiding dangerous web sites, consider installing one (or more) of the helpful site-safety add-ons described in our Search Securely roundup. If you see a red flag, stay away!
7. **Control Yourself.** Chances are good your security suite includes a private data protection option. When the data you've chosen to protect is about to go out in a web form, e-mail, or IM, it either prevents transmission or replaces the private data. This feature's not for everyone, but if you feel you need help controlling what you send out, give it a try.
8. **Use One-Shot Credit Cards.** Check with your credit card company online – they may offer an option to create one-shot credit card numbers. When you exercise this option to make a purchase online, the number received by the merchant will be valid for just that transaction.
9. **Educate Your Kids.** You can be fanatically careful, but it won't do any good if your kids e-mail or IM personal information to strangers. If they're old enough, get them on your team to protect your family's identity. If not, use parental controls or private data protection to limit their ability to blab family secrets.
10. **Secure Your System.** Forget the Internet – worry about a colleague or neighbor-kid who sits down at your system and copies off your personal files. Use strong passwords, and be sure to lock the desktop when you step away from the computer.
11. **Think Outside the Box.** Don't believe everything that comes in an envelope. And shred

## Smart Computing Tip Of The Day

### No Trespassing

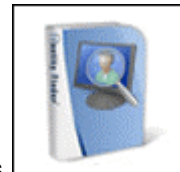
Not every PC security tip requires a high-tech solution. One of the most effective ways of keeping intruders away from your data is to shut down your Internet connection and turn off the PC when you aren't using it. Doing so discourages co-workers, janitors, children, and other snoops from peeking at your files.

any sensitive information before discarding or recycling it. Identity theft isn't limited to the online world!

12. **Inform Yourself.** There are plenty of resources available to help you understand just how you may be vulnerable. Start with PC Magazine's own "Identity Theft: What, Me Worry?" and "Defending Your Identity". Check free resources like the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft site. And be alert for fraud!

### IdentityFinder

Protect your identity by using this app to find unsecured sensitive information on your PC and encrypt or securely delete it. IdentityFinder's AnyFind technology locates specific data types like Social Security Numbers without help; you can enter your personal data for a deeper search. However, its scan takes a long time, and it crashed repeatedly in testing.



### MyTruston

This free service helps you prevent identity theft without making you give away your identity details. If the free prevention service identifies a problem, you can pay \$19.99/month for help with the solution – and drop the paid subscription as soon as the problem is solved.



### ZoneAlarm Internet Security Suite 7

ZAISS7 includes a year of credit card protection through partner IdentityGuard (normally \$29.95). But even if you don't use ZAISS you can benefit from the free services and information at ZoneLabs's Identity Protection Center



Note: Reviews of these and other security software are available at [www.PCMag.com](http://www.PCMag.com)

## Password Protection

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS  
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When technology is good, it is very, very good, but when it is bad it can be truly atrocious. So it is with the hacking of Sarah Palin's Yahoo email account. The bad guys are out there using technology for their own advantage. Whether they are serious hackers who want information for devious purposes or young students who just want to show their technological prowess, this theft shows that everyone is vulnerable.

The recent hijacking of Sarah Palin's email account is also a great example of how a hacker can gain access to an email account and how email accounts need to be better protected against such penetration.

We currently rely on passwords to protect most of our online activity. Professional hackers often use "password crackers" to guess passwords. Anyone can easily find these hacker tools on the Internet. They can even be purchased on CD. There are wordlists for common passwords and dictionary combinations of possible passwords in a variety of different languages. These tools are all aimed at giving a person all the technical tools that they need to guess passwords.

In Sarah Palin's case, however, the perpetrator didn't even have to use tools like this. A hacker identifying himself as "Rubico" claims to have been able to change the password on Sarah Palin's Yahoo Mail account quite easily. All he had to do was use her email name to log into the Yahoo Mail's interface and select the option to reset the password. Yahoo then asked him to provide her birth date and zip code, which have become public knowledge. He then had to answer her self-chosen security question which was where she met her husband. After several television interviews of Sarah and her husband, the answer to that question also became public knowledge.

Sarah Palin was thrown into the public arena quite quickly, but even those of us who are not public figures may find that their passwords and answers to security questions can be easily guessed. Do you use the name of your spouse, children, pet, favorite sport, birthday, or wedding date as your password? Have you entered secu-

rity questions like place of birth or favorite color that are easy to guess?

Privacy as we knew it before the Internet is now a thing of the past. With the Internet, more of our lives are online than most of us realize. Many people use blogging as a past time and post information on MySpace, Facebook, and other social networking websites. Once posted, all of that information is publicly known. And the Internet is archived, so even when you remove current information, previously posted information can still be found in Internet archives. That information can be used to guess passwords and access personal information.

So here are a few ground rules that may help keep your private information a little safer online:

1. Use passwords that are not easy to guess and cannot be easily cracked. (Look for more on how to choose good passwords in next week's column.)
2. Choose a security question that others will not be able to guess the answer to. Or answer the security question with an answer that you create which is not necessarily the true answer.
3. Use unique passwords, especially for important services and websites like banking sites and email.
4. Keep your passwords private. Don't leave them on a sticky note on your computer screen or keep them in an unencrypted file on your computer.
5. Change your passwords often.
6. Do not change your password by clicking on a link in an email from someone claiming to be a system administrator, bank representative, or other seemingly reputable party. They may not be who they say they are. When you want to change your password, always type in the address yourself so you know you are at the real website rather than a bogus one.
7. Use one credit card for all online purchases. This will limit your financial exposure.
8. Keep your operating system up-to-date.
9. Use a good anti-virus and anti-spyware programs.
10. Consider using an encrypted password manager program.

Check the Compu-KISS website at [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com) for more information on choosing good passwords.

# Next-Generation Bluetooth Headsets

By Jamie Lendino, Contributing editor of *PC Magazine*



Jamie is also the editor of Smart Device Central, a Ziff-Davis Web site dedicated to smartphones and mobile technology, and he blogs about car technology for TechnoRide.com and GoodCleanTech.com. He became a technology writer in 2003 after working for six years in the IT industry as a server, mobile, and workstation consultant. Along with smart devices, his realms of expertise include PCs, consumer electronics (such as MP3 players and cell phones), and Internet services.

The latest crop of Bluetooth headsets excel in style, comfort, and—most important—in sound quality.

A stunning 80 percent of mobile phone owners talk while driving, according to a recent survey by the Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. It's a major distraction—some have even equated using a cell phone behind the wheel with driving under the influence, since reaction times can be slowed during a call. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, distracted drivers cause about 80 percent of road fatalities in the U.S. each year.

As more and more states implement hands-free driving laws—California is the latest; with a new rule going into effect on July 1—having a headset for the car is vital. While many cell-phone manufacturers include them in the box with handsets, they're usually of the wired variety, which can be a pain to negotiate when you're behind the wheel. Instead, skip the messy wires and pick up a Bluetooth headset. The latest models we've reviewed offer a compelling balance of design, features, sound quality, and endurance. And unlike many prior models, most are comfortable to wear, too.

## In This Roundup:

### Aliph New Jawbone

The original Aliph Jawbone revolutionized the Bluetooth headset market in 2006 with its effective noise-cancellation circuitry, which the company had developed in accordance with DARPA military standards. The new model improves on the original's sound quality, and also downsizes it and simplifies the controls. Stay near an AC outlet or USB port, though, since it lasts less than 4 hours on a single charge.



### Callpod Dragon

Bluetooth headsets may be wireless, but walk more than 10 or 15 feet away from your cell phone and call quality drops markedly with most of them. Enter the Callpod Dragon, a pod-shaped headset that offers 40 to



50 feet of real-world range. You also get several charging options, multiple simultaneous device pairings, and a two-way mode for Dragon-to-Dragon headset communication with a buddy or colleague.

### Iqua 603 Sun

If you've had it with charging multiple gadgets every night, try the solar-powered 603 Sun. With its built-in, tiny solar panel the 603 charges whenever it's not in use, essentially offering unlimited standby time. It needs an initial charge to function, and a continuous 8-hour phone call will deplete its battery, but it can run seemingly forever otherwise. It sounds great, too.



### Plantronics Discovery 925

Fashion mavens should head straight to the striking Discovery 925. Its sharp, funky-looking yet unobtrusive design incorporates a boom mic that helps the unit offer good voice quality in both directions while avoiding the audio compromises inherent in most ultracompact Bluetooth headsets. It doesn't *quite* measure up to the Voyager 520 in audio perfection. But if looks could kill, the 925 would be dangerous.



### Plantronics Voyager 520

Plantronics is known for its solid, diverse stable of Bluetooth headsets. The Voyager 520 is one of the company's best, featuring excellent sound quality, a comfortable fit, and the ability to pair with two devices simultaneously—for example, you can pair both your mobile phone and your laptop, so as to switch between cellular and Skype calls. It's also bargain-priced at \$89.95.



### Samsung WEP700

The WEP700 is a good choice if you're looking for an ultracompact, comfortable headset. Samsung nails the one-size-fits-all idea, eschewing multiple ear loops and extra earbuds (which may be a problem for some). It



sounds clear and even in both directions, no doubt aided by the unit's automatic volume control. But ignore the company's noise and echo cancellation claims, as the WEP700 did neither on my tests.

### LG Decoy VX8610

The LG Decoy is a good, mid-range slider phone for Verizon with something extra: a Bluetooth headset tucked into the back, so you'll always have it at the ready. The headset recharges when it's plugged into the phone and activates when it's removed. At around 1.5 inches long and 0.75 inch wide, it's pleasingly compact, and it performed well in quiet environments.



### Aliph New Jawbone

Aliph has been around since 1999, but the company rocketed to stardom in 2006 with the intro-

duction of the Jawbone Bluetooth Headset, arguably the first noise-canceling model that actually worked. Its noise-canceling circuitry, plus the Jawbone's style and sound quality, netted it our Editors' Choice award. Since then, however, a number of new headsets have caught up—especially our current Editors' Choice, the excellent-sounding Plantronics Voyager 520. After two years, Aliph has produced an encore—and it's called, appropriately, the New Jawbone. It boasts the same noise-canceling performance of its predecessor, but with updated styling and without all the bulk. But does the new Jawbone have what it takes?

*Jamie is also a composer and sound designer for video games. He has created sound effects and music for over 30 titles, including Spongebob's Atlantis SquarePantis (THQ) and The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion (2K Games). He was a huge Atari fan back in the day and can be easily red into any room that contains vintage arcade machine.*

## Silver to Silicon - The Uncut Move to Digital Photos

Review By Andy Marken

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A Fun, Lively Guided Tour of the Changes in Today's Photography Technology

Rochester, NY - October 22, 2008 - There's nothing that brings people closer together or means so much to friends and family than photos. A veteran industry consultant and journalist, John Larish takes you through the 25-years of photography change from analog film to digital chips in his new book *Silver to Silicon* that was recently released on Amazon.com.

Ever wonder how the "Brownie" was developed, why your 35mm single lens reflex (SLR) camera sits gathering dust, how it is that pre-teens have to carry (and use) a digital camera and camphone all of the time? John Larish delivers all of these answers and thousands more as he takes you from the chemical mixing pots to today's quick and easy snap/shoot/see visual content world. When you finish the \$18 book you'll have a greater appreciation and understanding of why people around the world are not just taking billions of photos/videos every day but posting them on web sites and sending them instantly to people around the globe to see, experience, enjoy.

Whether you're a professional photographer or first time photo buff, Larish's 200 page paperback takes you from the early mystery days of alchemy mystery days of capturing, processing, showing/sharing and archiving images to today's high tech,

high fun digital image experiences. Larish takes you inside the engineering and processing labs of the photo industry's early days to the sleek semiconductor clean rooms and photo/video design labs in Europe, the US and Asian technology centers to understand the steps and missteps of the industry that provides the common communications denominator around the globe today - images.

The author speaks from first hand experience having started with the Army Signal Corp and later as a photo lab manager before moving to GAF and then for 15 plus years with Kodak. He carried on a dual career working inside the day-to-day operations of one of the leading photography firms as well as being a journalist documenting the changes and advances in every segment of the industry.

A speaker at conferences and sought-after authority on the imaging industry, Larish takes you with him to hundreds of trade shows, major unveilings and industry leader meetings where executives explain the work that is being done and products that are being made available for professional photographers/videographers as well as today's shoot and post/send generation.

You'll sit next to him on his global travels (yes that's another book) as he talks to people from all walks of life about the changing look of photogra-

phy. You'll enjoy his analysis and interpretation of the minor and major advances that have put the fun in today's photography as well as his personal look in the crystal ball of what tomorrow offers.

Silver to Silicon is available exclusively from Amazon.com for \$18. To check out the book visit <<http://tinyurl.com/5c96c9>> or [Open in new window] <<http://preview.tinyurl.com/5c96c9>>.



## Computers 101 —

By Erin, WorldStart Staff Member

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**Q:**  
**You've talked about laptops going through airport security before, but what about other electronic devices, such as flash drives and CDs? Can those be damaged when going through the security line?**

**A:**  
That's a great question and it couldn't have come at a better time! With Christmas and New Year's right around the corner, I'm sure a lot of you will be traveling via airplane to go visit your family and friends. And along with everything else, you'll probably be taking certain devices, such as your digital camera, cell phone, MP3 player or even possibly a flash drive. No matter what you take with you, it's vital to know what you need to do to keep all of those things safe while you travel. Keep reading for some helpful suggestions!

The biggest concern when it comes to traveling with your electronic devices is the airport security line. It's always been a fear that when you send your media through the X-ray machine, everything you have saved will be erased or damaged. For example, if you send your digital camera through, will all of the pictures you have saved be demolished? Or, how about your MP3 player or iPod? Will all of your songs be erased with one quick swipe? It's scary to think about that happening, but luckily, it rarely does.

Fortunately, most airports think about that kind of thing beforehand. Airport X-ray machines actually emit an electromagnetic energy, which is not magnetic at all. Therefore, they cannot damage or destroy any electrical equipment. This goes for laptops, CDs, DVDs, PDAs, memory cards, floppy disks, flash drives, external hard drives, MP3 players, iPods, digital cameras, cell phones and just about anything else you can think of. So, just to make sure we're clear, let's go over all of those in a little more detail. Here we go!

**CDs, DVDs** - This includes all of the different types of CDs and DVDs, including R and RW. Any type of optical disk cannot be affected by an X-ray machine and they will not be damaged or erased when passing through.

**Laptop, PDA, other types of computers** - These types of devices are not sensitive to X-rays, which means they will not be affected. The same goes for all of the components within them as well (motherboard, graphics card, video card, etc).

**Flash media** - This includes any type of storage device you may use for your digital camera. Memory cards are not sensitive to light, which means they will not be affected when passing through an X-ray machine. As you probably know, film can be damaged when hit with light, so if you were to X-ray a film camera, the images would be erased. (You do remember traditional film cameras, don't you?!)

**Floppy disks** - Floppies are affected by magnetic charges, but since airport X-ray machines don't carry any magnetic energy at all, they will be safe. Unless you run a magnet over the metal area on your floppy disk, the data you have saved will not be destroyed.

**Hard disk drives** - This category includes flash drives, thumb drives, external hard drives, etc. These all work very similarly to a floppy drive, so even though they're sensitive to magnetic charges, an X-ray machine will not affect the material you have saved on them.

**Other electronics** - Finishing up, this one includes MP3 players, iPods, digital cameras, cell phones and any other devices you can think of. Unless the manufacturer of your device states an item is affected by X-rays, the data you have saved will not be lost. Certain products may be different, so make sure you read through your user manual before taking anything like this through an airport X-ray machine.

Now, before I end, I want to make sure everyone

knows we're talking about an X-ray machine and not a metal detector. They are two different things and airports usually have both. Metal detectors can sometimes damage electronic devices, so you'll want to make sure you let the security personnel at your airport know you're carrying a sensitive device. If you do that, they should be able to hand check your items for you so that you don't

have to risk putting them in danger. Make sure you're always aware of which machine you're going through and how it will affect the items you brought with you. If you do that, your flying experience will be as smooth as silk. Happy holiday traveling, my friends!

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## Mac versus PC

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS  
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We have all seen the popular Apple television commercials encouraging computer users to switch from Windows to Mac. Not only are the commercials convincing, but Apple has made some moves that make the Mac a viable option for computer users. In years past, the biggest drawback to purchasing a Mac was that Windows software was incompatible with a Mac. You couldn't use Windows software that was not available in a Mac version so switching from a PC to a Mac meant repurchasing all your software applications.

Then Apple made the move from Motorola processors to Intel processors. This made the Apple hardware compatible with Windows software. Any Mac that you purchase today is able to run both the Windows and the Mac operating system. You can do this by using a free Apple program called Boot Camp that is available to all Mac users. Using Boot Camp, you have to reboot the computer every time you want to switch between the two operating systems. Another option makes using Windows on a Mac even easier. If you purchase a simple virtualization product like Parallels, you can switch on the fly.

Being able to run Windows on a Mac has been a boon to Apple. In 2004 their market share in the operating system segment was a little over 3%. Today it is close to 8% and growing. There are fewer worries when using a Mac. For the most part, Macs are almost completely virus and spyware free. It's not that Macs are actually more secure, it's just that with the viruses and programs that infiltrate computers to steal information and to send out spam are operating system-specific. In other words, the hackers have to create their programs to run on either Windows or Mac. Since the Windows operating system is cur-

rently running on over 90% of computers, that operating system is the most likely target for the bad guys. So right now, Macs are ignored by most hackers.

It can also be said that Macs run their software better than PCs. The reason that this is true is that because Apple produces all of the hardware they can have strict control over every hardware component. So the software producers know exactly what hardware their software will run on. In the PC world, slight differences in the hardware can cause software headaches. As you know, with HP, Dell, Acer, Sony, Gateway, and many others producing the hardware, there is compatibility, but not necessarily full hardware/software compliance.

So why doesn't everyone switch to the Mac? Well, it can be summed up quite easily in one word, "Price". Macs always have been, and are still are, more expensive than PCs. Often Macs can cost several hundreds of dollars more than comparable Windows machines. This week Apple announced their first sub-\$1,000 laptop computer. The MacBook will now be selling at \$999. Their higher-end MacBook Pro will start at \$1,999. In contrast, you can buy many Windows laptops for under \$1,000, and some are now even under \$500.

Another thing that makes the Mac more costly is that when you purchase an Apple computer it comes with the Mac OS X operating system. If you want to run Windows on your Mac as well, you will have to purchase a full version of Windows. As I write this, Amazon is selling the full version of Windows XP Home Edition for \$179. A full version of Windows Vista Home Premium is currently selling at Amazon for \$222. If you want to add the ability to easily switch between the two operating systems, you will have to dish out about \$80 more for Parallels or another good virtualization program. In some cases those added costs

can almost double the cost of a cheap PC.

The other reason that some people won't switch to a Mac is that they don't want to have to learn to use a new operating system. But if you are currently using Windows XP and you purchase a new computer now, you will have at least a slight learning curve to make the transition to Windows Vista.

If Apple would lower their prices and create a free program that would let you run Windows without rebooting, I wouldn't mind purchasing the additional Windows software necessary to be able to

run both operating systems on a Mac. In fact, I think that those two changes would have people flocking in droves to the Mac. But then, if the Apple operating system gains a bigger market share, hackers will start targeting it as well as Windows. Oh well, I guess life in the computer world really does mirror life in the real world. It seems that nothing will ever be perfect in either world.

Parallels Desktop for Mac is the first solution for Intel-Macs that give you the flexibility of running Windows on a Mac OS X simultaneously without rebooting. C

## Scanning E-mail Attachments

By Neil Patel, WorldStart Staff Member

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Do you even think twice before you download a picture, music file or video clip that comes attached in an e-mail from a trusted family member or friend? I'm guessing you don't, but I'm sure you'll start after you hear what I have to say next. Brace yourself! Malicious software can easily hide itself in documents and media files and if you happen to open one of those on your computer, it could become infected as well. Yikes!

Because of that, it's very important to scan the attachments before you open them. Now, most e-mail programs do a preliminary check, but as I'm sure you know, no system is fool proof. So, that's why I'm bringing you a free service today called VirusTotal that allows you to scan your e-mails for complete safety!

- 1.) The next time you get an e-mail containing a file that looks suspicious, here's what you should do.



Sunset.jpg  
70K [View](#) [Download](#)

- 2.) First, forward the e-mail to this address: [scan@virstotal.com](mailto:scan@virstotal.com)

- 3.) Now, clear out the body of the message and on the subject line, type in **SCAN**.
- 4.) Send the e-mail and within a short while, you will receive a message that looks similar to this:

```
[VirusTotal] Server notification
Complete scanning result of "Sunset.jpg", processed in VirusTotal at 05

[File data]
* name: Sunset.jpg
* size: 71169
* md5: 1be5b7770e59b71be12c722ee433da45
* sha1: 5bd2e80930655a4615147612a0fa3055930c6
* pass...

[Scan result]
Ad-Aware 2.0.11.20080502 found nothing
Avira 4.53.0.20080502 found nothing
Avast 4.0.1109.0/20080502 found nothing
AVG 7.5.0.1020080503 found nothing
BitDefender 7.2.20080503 found nothing
CAT-QuickHeal 9.0.0/20080502 found nothing
ClamAV 0.92.120080502 found nothing
DrWeb 4.44.0.09170/20080502 found nothing
eSafe 7.0.15.0/20080428 found nothing
eTrust-Vet 31.3.5725/20080503 found nothing
Ewido 4.0/20080502 found nothing
F-Prot 4.4.2.54/20080502 found nothing
F-Secure 6.70.13250.0/20080502 found nothing
Frodo 3.12.0.0/20080502 found nothing
Ikarus T3.1.2/20080503 found nothing
Kaspersky 7.0.0.126/20080502 found nothing
McAfee 5.527/20080502 found nothing
Microsoft 1.2403/20080422 found nothing
NOD32 3.07.2/20080503 found nothing
Norman 5.00.0/20080502 found nothing
Panda 2.0.0.4/20080503 found nothing
Pravix 1.0/20080503 found nothing
Rising 20.42.00.00/20080430 found nothing
Sophos 4.7.0/20080502 found nothing
Sunbelt 3.0.1057.0/20080501 found nothing
Symantec 10/20080503 found nothing
TheHacker 6.2.02.200/20080430 found nothing
VBA32 3.12.0.20080502 found nothing
VirusBuster 4.9.26/20080502 found nothing
Webwasher-Gateway 6.5.2/20080502 found nothing

VirusTotal is a free service offered by F-Secure Systems. There are no automatic address that will not handle any reply. Although the detection guarantees the harmlessness of a file. Currently, there is not any solution
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- 5.) As you can see, the report lists several antivirus scanners and it shows whether or not the scanner detected any threats. In my sample file, nothing was found, so I knew it was safe to download it.

**Note:** VirusTotal is a very trustworthy and reliable service, but I don't recommend using it for any documents you receive from a known contact that contain sensitive information. Instead, download the file and scan it using your regular antivirus software.

I hope you enjoy this invaluable tool!