

April Newsletter 2010

Vol. 3 No. 4

I swear these months keep getting shorter. I know this newsletter will definitely be shorter. With my move back home (a very good thing), the ARA (Alliance for Retired Americans) Conference I am attending (I leave early Easter morning and still have to pack), one of my original "Long Line of Friends" greeting cards (4-5 feet long) I promised to bring (then almost forgot to make), plus this newsletter; I am simply running out of time.

The rain means I will get the rest of my stuff out of Kay's house when I return. I need a light box to finish the major parts of my card—the copy store has one & opens at 9—but I can do the middle (long necks) and color it in anywhere. I can work at all hours on this newsletter. The really tough part is writing this section. The rest is just like putting a jig saw puzzle together—it just takes time. As long as I get it finished, I can email it from my hotel. I will simply pack in-between everything else and hope I don't forget anything.

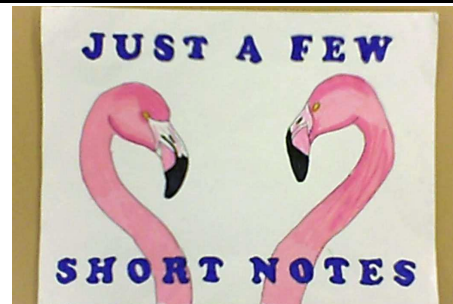
Yikes! I almost forgot about the Post Office Food Drive. I co-ordinate St. Vincent de Paul's part—the trucks, the salads, and the workers. The meeting is next Monday. I will be at the ARA conference in Vegas. Add "find a substitute for the meeting" to my to do list. At least I remembered before I left.

I think I will close with a quote from Andy's email message. The article that came with it is long, but very interesting.

A short note on the Free Wi Fi article. I get links to information in emails from trusted sources all the time. This one came in January this year. The article is from the internet, but I didn't save the source or the author. Because I use public computers when I access the internet I can get cut off before I get all the pertinent data down. The Sonoma County Library system now gives you extra time to save before logging you off. It does not give you time to add anything.

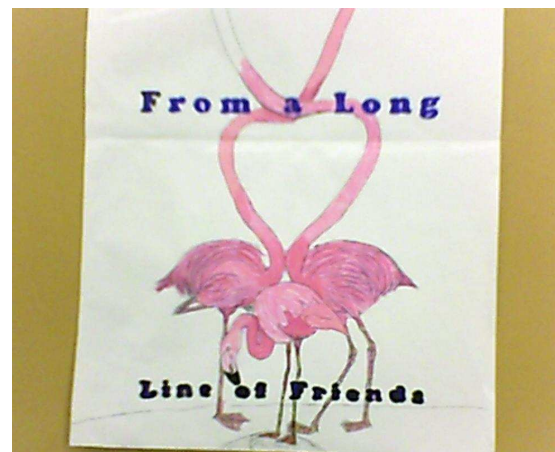
Have a very happy Easter!

—Beth



"The PC/CE/Communications/content industries change so rapidly sometimes we believe that if we take time out to sleep we might miss something really important and never catch up ... ever. Ok so that may be an exaggeration but we firmly believe that even if all you want to do simply keep up companies have to carry out a continuous business and skills education program. It doesn't have to be formal classroom instruction. It can be conferences, seminars, webinars, or downloadable educational materials.

It doesn't matter if the program is formal or it is something you do on your own just for yourself. Keeping abreast of technology, applications, communications/marketing tools, successes and failures (by others) helps the industry and key players keep pace with channel and consumer demands. Hope you agree...Andy"



Business, Skills Training Is a Never Ending Process

By Andy Marken

andy(at)markencom.com



No technology in history has grown as quickly as the Internet. Backbone bandwidth demand has been doubling, not every 18 months as with Moore's law but every 3.5 months. That's a 10X growth or 1,000% a year. The increased bandwidth is also fostering social media as well as video technology and applications to expand almost as quickly.

With it has come a complete change in who we communicate with, the way we communicate with them. It has also changed how we work and how long we work. While life in Silicon Valley is akin to working at the edge of disaster, we like to believe that the rest of the country – in fact the globe – is in much the same state of chaos.

Education Environment Has Changed

When we went to college eons ago, we sat in a classroom, listened to the instructor, took copious notes and regurgitated the information on a test. With two degrees we set forth to conquer and change the world.

Unfortunately we didn't change the world.

Technology changed the world.

The rapid changes in technology are so prolific that it has forced us to become lifelong learners. Rather than rigidly structured process learning is becoming a self-directed process.

There has been more information produced in the last 5 years than during the previous 5,000. A weekday edition of *The New York Times* contains more information than the average person was likely to come in contact with in the last century in his or her lifetime. The change has been the Internet/Web as well as the value of and our use of information.

Dynamics of Business

To understand how quickly life has changed and continues to change for us consider a study regarding e-mail conducted by Forrester Research and John Carroll University:

- 6 trillion email messages sent annually worldwide
- 8 billion messages sent worldwide daily
- 900 million users sending messages daily
- 1,600+ million corporate e-mail addresses

- 2,500 million personal email addresses
- average cost of e-mail per user per year-- \$750
- average value of email per user per year in terms of productivity -- \$4,500
- average cost of company to send 20 messages -- \$1.05
- average time spent daily reading e-mail – 50 minutes
- average time spent responding to email – 60 minutes

According to an article in *BusinessWeek*, every day 10,000 +/- new Web sites are added to the Internet. New social media locations open up on the iNet daily struggling for your personal and business attention.

Increasingly these sites are video enabled. All of this has forced us to broaden our interest and knowledge areas. It has made it imperative for us to deal and respond “comfortably” in a rapidly changing environment of uncertainty.

New Type of Worker

Peter Drucker in his book, *Post Capitalism Society*, noted that at least 2/3 of the industrial world's employees work in the service sector. Knowledge is one of our most important products. This calls for a different type of worker because a degree and technical experience are far less important than the currency of your business skills.

No one can say what technology platforms will dominate this century or what lies beyond the Web and enterprise resource planning. Individuals, corporations and educational institutions are adapting their training goals and programs to prepare for unseen changes.

Experts who track technically-based career development and training see some trends emerging including:

- Business skills are becoming as important as technical skills in defining the success of professionals
- New technologies such as Web-based learning and video-on-demand coursework are rapidly supplanting classroom training
- Technical professionals must view education as a continuing and self-directed process

Many organizations have begun to identify core

business competencies for technical professionals and make learning them mandatory. Increasingly they have to learn communications skills, budgeting and finance, strategic planning as well as project and performance management.

Firms are adding on-the-job training by matching people with appropriate learning tools. On-line video-on-demand courses, workshops and seminars are required for people at all levels and all disciplines. Some companies have gone so far as to establish required courses, electives and degree certificates.

Addressing Larger Issues

While select technical skills continue to be in



critically short supply, organizations also understand that they must help employees embrace and address larger business issues including finance and marketing.

Gartner Group reported early last year that corporate technical staff skills will shift from 65 percent technology to 65 percent business and management skills by the end of the year. While technical skills will continue to be important, much of that work will be outsourced and key internal personnel will be involved in business and technical management.

Because of the growing supply versus demand problem, traditional business schools are beginning to shift to competency-based education.

For example the governors of the 14 western states and CEOs of major corporations created the Western Governors University (WGU) in Salt Lake City several years ago. The University en-

ables students to earn credits toward a diploma by taking skill assessment tests rather than courses.

The goal was to respond to business and industry needs by providing a means of certifying that an individual can do the job rather than simply prove that he or she has a diploma.

Educational Shift

Gartner predicts that training delivery will shift from 25 percent technology and 75 percent instructor based to 50-50 by the end of the year. Video on demand and Web based training will grow rapidly over the next two years. Organizations of all sizes are beginning to view training not as a business cost but rather as an investment in

key members of the organization.

For many, the accelerated pace of technology change over the past five years is straining their ability to keep up.

Fortunately for generation X and Y workers skill development is viewed quite differently from boomers. For them, ongoing learning is a reality. It is part of the cost of participating in the world. They have become very adept at gathering, processing, analyzing and interpreting information – retaining and discarding data as needed.

It is all part of the “normal” day.

Employees who are planning their future in an uncertain environment have to realize that just as they need money for food, rent/mortgage and utilities, they also need education.

When firms “re-engineered” themselves to become “lean and mean” they reduced their training

programs. Those who plan on being productive are finding that they must invest in themselves.

While some may disagree, we feel that the shift is healthy.

Today employer and employee loyalty is dead.

Employees don't feel guilty or obligated to pay back the organization for the training. They are investing in the training for their career advancement themselves.

Expanding, Changing Our Skills

As we move forward in the 21st century, traditional technical workers will have to expand their business skills while general business employees have to become more proficient in their understanding and use of technology. People across the board will need to not only know how the devices and applications work, where the information is located and what the data means.

The lines between technology and business practices are blurring.

Good management skills are more valuable, more respected and more richly rewarded as we move further into the century because they are a combination of courage and strong, genuine con-

cern for individuals, the company, society and the customer. Good management skills are based on the individual and how efficiently and effectively he or she executes the plans despite the lack of firm guidelines.

These abilities are more difficult to acquire than course-taught capabilities.

In today's global business environment, business skills – knowledge of your company, its mission, the industry and your competitors – are vital survival skills. They are skills which change with every tick of the clock.

Everyone today is under tremendous pressure to leverage knowledge and information in everything that they do, even when the path and the destination are unclear.

People have to leverage knowledge and experience in innovative ways on an ongoing basis.

For the success of organizations where decisions must be made with incomplete data, people who can embrace and deal with uncertainty will be a critical resource for organizations that prosper by leveraging their available knowledge and information.

Message Scams

By Boyd Lutz, WorldStart Guest Writer

This information has been reprinted with permission from WorldStart

Q:
When I am surfing the web I sometimes get strange message windows popping up. Windows Security Alerts or error messages saying that my computer "infected" or "too slow" How can I tell if they are real and what should I do about them?

A:
Recently there has been an upswing in the number of "Fake Security Alert" messages popping up as people surf the Internet. These message windows say: Your computer is too slow, has been infected by a virus, requires an update or already has been infected with Trojans and other Malware. They are all false warnings, designed to convince users to purchase illegitimate and possibly dangerous fake security software. This article will provide sample screenshots of these phony alerts and outline a few simple ways to recognize and prevent these pesky problems.

Ironically, as people become more aware of the potential problems of malware, the number of

these fake message scams increases. Fortunately, there are a few general things you can look for to identify and avoid these phony programs.

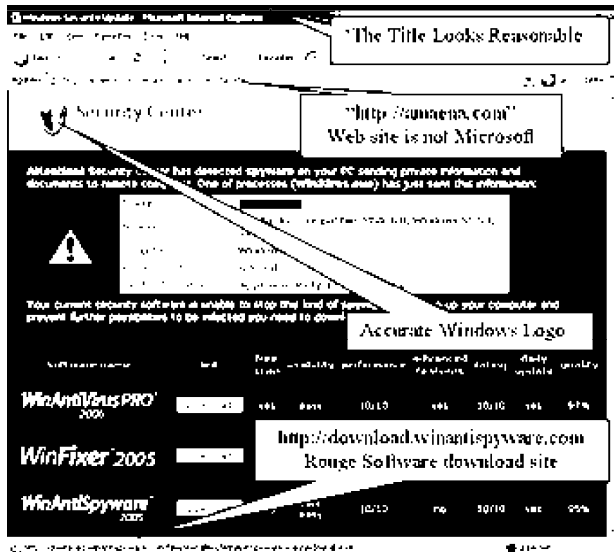
1. They generally use scare tactics that implore you to act immediately to remove a virus, download a critical security update or repair a serious computer problem.



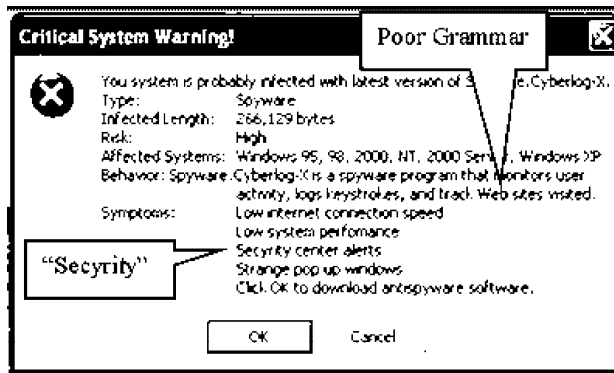
2. Even though they often try to mimic a legitimate company's message, there is almost always

something that will not be correct. In the example below the Windows Security Center logo is correct and the title looks legitimate. However, the Web address is not Microsoft's and the download site that the "recommended" program will come from is also not Microsoft.

Some try to look like legitimate Windows Security Updates.



This fake Windows Critical System Warning! is very well done. Closer examination reveals questionable grammar, "and track Web sites visited" and a spelling error, "Secyurity". I also don't think Microsoft would warn about "Strange pop up windows"



These are just a few examples of what a fake message looks like. There are hundreds that might pop up on your screen. But you don't need to be overly concerned if follow a few general rules. Any message that pops up while you are on the Internet should be considered to be a possible problem until you have done a little research. Often, just putting the name of the program to be

downloaded or the address of the web site you are requested to visit in Google will provide enough information to determine its validity. Two of the largest Anti-virus software companies Symantec and McAfee maintain searchable lists of known threats.

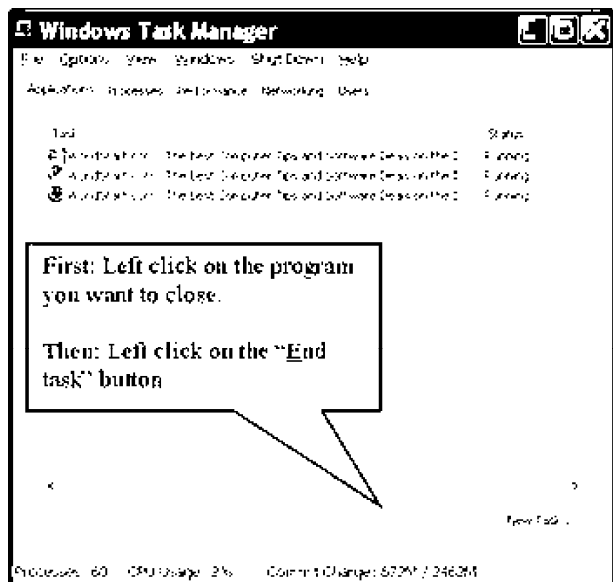
So what should you do if you if a suspect message appears on you screen?

Do not move your mouse anywhere near it. Clicking anywhere in the window including the standard looking red "X" in the upper right had corner of the window may start downloading the Rogue Software.

Try holding down the "Alt" key and pressing the "F4" key at the same time. This should close the active rogue message window or the browser that is displaying the message. Then you can continue by opening your browser again.

If the "Alt" key + "F4" combination does not close the suspect message window another way to close it is outlined below.

1. Open the windows Task Manager by pressing the "Ctrl", "Alt" and "Delete" keys simultaneously.
2. Left click on the "Applications" tab.
3. Left click on your browser program or any entry listed as running that you believe may be the problem. Proceed to step 4 after the target program is highlighted, (often it will turn blue).
4. Left click on the "End task" button to close the program.



You should always have an up-to-date firewall and virus protection software running every time you turn on your computer. In addition, you can set your browser to block pop up windows. There are several articles on the Worldstart site on how to do this.

Please note: Blocking pop-ups with your browser settings will not stop all of these rogue messages from getting through. Also, you may need to adjust your browser settings to allow pop-ups from certain

banking sites or other online services you may not want blocked.

In addition, it is a good practice to run an additional anti-malware program every few days. There are many effective free programs available for download. One that does an excellent job is Malwarebytes Anti-Malware.

You can read about it and download the free version here: <http://malwarebytes.org/>

Free Wi-Fi

Author unknown

The Wi-Fi-FreeSpot Directory does not list private, residential locations (except for vacation rental properties where access is included in the rental fee), only publicly accessible locations. Although many home owners and renters have chosen to leave their wireless in an open unsecured state that can be freely accessed by their neighbors and passersby, the location is not accessible to the public for entry. Cafes, libraries and the other locations listed in the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot Directory can be entered by the public, even though they may choose to access the signal from outside if possible.

Efforts are made to insure that the information contained in the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot Directory is accurate. But, occasionally you may find that a listed location does not offer Free Wi-Fi access at your time of visit. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause to location owners and visitors. When possible, it is best to check ahead of time with the location.

A few things to keep in mind about some Free Wi-Fi high speed internet access locations.

- It is an open unsecured connection. Use a VPN - virtual private network - for extra protection if you plan to transfer any sensitive information.
- The signal may not always be on or be strong.
- In fact, it may be from another location. Try to make sure you are accessing the right network signal for the location you're at (although that may not always be possible if you don't know the network name/SSID). In airports in particular beware of networks named "Free Wi-Fi" or a similar name, it's an ad hoc, peer-to-peer network, possibly set up as a trap by someone with a laptop nearby.
- Some locations may require a purchase to get

the login info required to connect.

- Some locations may have SafeSurf type software installed that will restrict access to some web sites.
- Don't expect to get much support help from the staff, they're waitresses or baristas, etc., not tech support people. Some may not even know it exists.
- Don't expect to find many plugs. Make sure your battery is charged or bring a spare.
- Some locations will not allow outgoing e-mail to be sent via their SMTP server. Use a web based e-mail account if you need to send e-mail while in this type of free location.
- If you are just on the premises for the Wi-Fi connection and don't intend to make a purchase you should consider limiting your stay to a reasonable time period. Also, be considerate, give up your seat if someone who has made a purchase needs one.
- At a lot of Hotzones or other similarly named types of access that cover an outdoors area (usually town, city or municipality sponsored/ provided), the signal may or may not carry to the inside of and be available in the businesses within the Hotzone.
- It's Free!

What does Free Wi-Fi really mean?

As the availability of Free Wi-Fi locations continues to spread I thought it might be good to review what Free might mean in different types of locations. The locations listed in the Wi-Fi FreeSpot Directory all offer some type of Free Wi-Fi access to the public, but sometimes there may be access requirements/restrictions that are unique to a particular type of location, and therefore the access, although free, may not be available to everyone/ anyone. While accessing the Free Wi-Fi in certain



locations you will be spending money to pay for a Hotel room or space in a RV Resort or for coffee in a cafe, etc. so the following information should help to clarify what Free Wi-Fi really means in different locations.

Most of the locations listed will not have any restrictions, but there will be some locations that may restrict access in several ways - through a login procedure to users with a registered account that requires you to be a registered guest of their facility - some may require you to be a customer who has made a purchase to gain a password needed to login - and some may ask some survey questions as part of a login process.

Libraries

Many cities and towns are now offering Free Wi-Fi in their public libraries. Some might require a library card to use the access but in public libraries free really means free - no purchase required or expected. Many libraries have software that will restrict access to many "questionable" web sites.

Academic Locations

Many academic institutions that offer Free Wi-Fi on their campuses restrict the access to members of their academic community - students, staff, etc. - and require some kind of login procedure to control access, but, there are some that don't have any restrictions. So, in academic locations, it is free but maybe not free for all.

Hotels, Motels and Resorts

If these locations offer Free Wi-Fi in their guest rooms then you'd need to be a registered guest to use the access, thus, free may mean it's included in the price of the room. If these locations offer Free Wi-Fi in common areas of the location - lobby, pool area, restaurant, bar/lounge, meeting rooms - the use may be restricted to guests but they may make the access available to non-guests as well. Assume that most Hotel type free Wi-Fi is meant for guests only, even in the common public areas, but you can always try

it at a listed location just in case it is not.

RV Parks and Campgrounds

Most locations of this type will require users to be registered guests of the location. Be sure to check whether the Free Wi-Fi access is available only in or near a "clubhouse" type of building or whether the access reaches the RV pads and campsite areas of the property.

Vacation Rental Properties

You must be the renter of the property to access the wireless high speed internet access provided by the property owner as an amenity.

Cafes, coffee shops, restaurants, miscellaneous, etc.

Some of these locations require a purchase to obtain a password while others have an explicit policy that requires you to be a customer and thus implies that you'll be making a purchase to get the free access. Some require you to ask for a password even without a purchase.

Most of these locations do not require a purchase to access the Free Wi-Fi. But, I'm sure it would certainly be appreciated. Let your conscience be your guide. The access here is free for all but if you choose to make a purchase while you're there I don't think this would mean that free is no longer free.

Other locations

The Directory does list some businesses, for example; medical offices, dental offices, law offices, real estate agent offices, car dealerships etc., that offer Free Wi-Fi to their clients while on the premises. They are most likely not locations where the general public would be welcome just to access the Free Wi-Fi, but they are listed as access providers. Some people may choose to select these businesses for their medical or other needs based on the availability of Free Wi-Fi during their visits.

What if I need Help connecting?

Most locations are striving to make the connection process as easy as possible. The goal is to automatically configure your laptop for connection. But, as you can imagine, with lots of different vendors selling access points and cards there could be specific configuration instructions you'll need to follow. By and large do not expect much help from the staff at the location. They are waiters, waitresses or baristas, not tech support people. Hopefully they will at least be able to supply you with an instructional guide but don't count on it. If you are using a hotspot that offers free access you won't find any toll free tech support number to call (that's

one reason why they are able to offer the access for free). You'll probably be on your own so it would help to familiarize yourself with the instructions for your wireless card beforehand or bring them with you. Some hints that should work in most locations -

1. Be sure to set your TCP/IP properties to "Obtain and IP address automatically" (DHCP).
2. Make sure your computer is not configured to automatically use a dial-up connection
3. If requested, choose Infrastructure mode rather than ad-hoc mode. 4) Use the SSID name provided by the location or try choosing "any". 5) Turn encryption (WEP) off. 6) Make sure your battery is fully charged. Most hotspots will not have many wall plugs available for use by customers.

What can I do at a Wi-Fi-FreeSpot?

The Wi-Fi wireless broadband connection allows you to do anything you'd do from home or the office. You can surf the Web, check your e-mail, connect to your Corporate network (be sure to use a secure VPN connection), make free Voice over IP phone calls, play online games, update your blog, and IM with your friends. If you just have a modem dial-up account at home you'll probably end up spending more time at the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot

once you see how much faster it is. Who knows, maybe you'll give up your dial-up account and just use the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot when you want to go online. (Your ability to send e-mail from a Wi-Fi-FreeSpot is somewhat dependent on the policy of your local Internet Service Provider (ISP) that provides your home/office internet and e-mail access - some ISPs restrict the ability to send email when not connected to the Internet directly through them. If you have a problem ask the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot location owner for their SMTP server info, or consider a web based e-mail account for use at a Wi-Fi-FreeSpot.)

Is my data and e-mail secure at a Wi-Fi-FreeSpot?

You should never conduct unsecured transactions that include any account or password information over public hotspots using FTP, email, or the Web. Try to use SSL for email (POP and SMTP), or read your email with a Web browser using an SSL connection. Ask your ISP if they offer SSL secure web-based email.

Glenn Fleishman, author of the book *The Wireless Networking Starter Kit*, sums it up thusly, "When data leaves your computer, if it's not on an encrypted link, anyone can read everything you

Use Gmail as an Extra Drive

By Cosmin Ursachi, WorldStart Guest Writer

This information has been reprinted with permission from WorldStart

Ever needed some online space to store files before sending them as email attachments? Maybe you need a way to store your presentations, pictures, documents or even your video collection online?

Online storage services require that you subscribe to a data plan. In addition, they don't offer a secure connection or a decent amount of storage space unless you pay a monthly fee.

If you already use Gmail, you know it's one of the best email service providers in the world. Gmail offers powerful spam protection, enhanced security and more than 7 GB (and growing) of free online storage space for emails.

However, emails require only a small amount of space for storage, leaving the rest of the space unused. So, why not use Gmail's free space to store other files besides emails?

Gmail Drive is a free shell extension that allows you to do just that. Gmail Drive creates a new sys-

tem partition in My Computer and integrates the space offered by Google into Windows Explorer. It allows you to use the online space as if it were just another hard drive attached to your computer. You can transfer files by drag & drop or copy/paste from your PC directly into your Gmail Inbox. And, it works with any version of Windows!

As great as Gmail Drive is, it does have some limitations. Gmail itself imposes most of these limitations.

Gmail has a limit of 25 MB per file. To counteract this, Gmail Drive will automatically split bigger files into smaller pieces.

While normal Windows operations such as creating new folders and copy/paste work well, Gmail Drive does not assign an actual drive letter (such as C :) to the drive it creates in My Computer. This prevents its use by some older Windows applications and all DOS programs.

In addition, because of limitations inside Gmail,

file names are limited to 40 characters.

The first step towards enjoying your new storage space is to have a Gmail account. To sign up for a Gmail account, visit <https://www.google.com> and click on **Gmail** above the Google search bar.

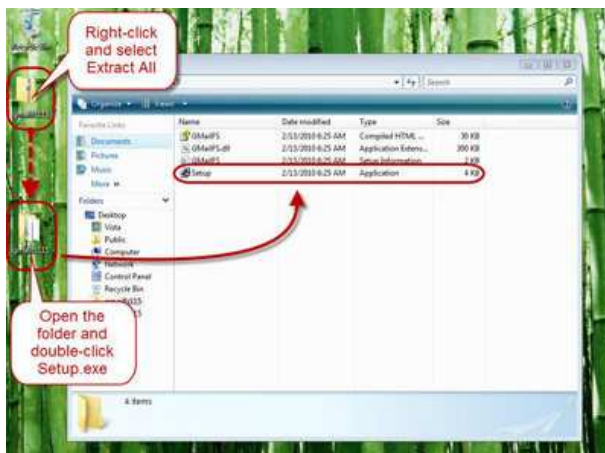
Then, click on **Create an account**, and fill in the form with your information.

If you already have a Gmail account, you can skip this step.

The next step is to install Gmail Drive.



Begin by pointing your browser to <http://www.viksoe.dk/code/gmail.htm>, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on one of the two download links. Then save the file to your desktop for easy access.



Next, open **gmailfs115.zip** with your favorite file archiver (I recommend 7-zip since it's free) or right-click the file and choose **"Extract All"** from the menu.

After you've unpacked the zip file, go to the **gmailfs115** folder and double-click **Setup.exe**.

If you get an **Open File – Security Warning**, click on **Run** to give Windows permission to start the installation.

After the installation program finishes making changes to your computer, close the help window.

If you go to **My Computer** ("**Computer**" for Windows Vista and 7) you will see a new drive in the **Other** category.



Double-click the **GMail Drive** to open the login window. Then, in the **Username** field input your Gmail id (ex: johndoe21) and in the password field input the password you chose for your Gmail account.

Check the **Auto Login** box to make sure that next time you double-click the drive you'll be logged in automatically.

Before you click **OK** to connect to Gmail, click the **More** button to reveal some advanced options.

First, make sure the **"Preserve Filenames"** option is checked.

Second and this is **very important**, check the **Use Secure HTTP** option. This will make the connection between your computer and Gmail secure.

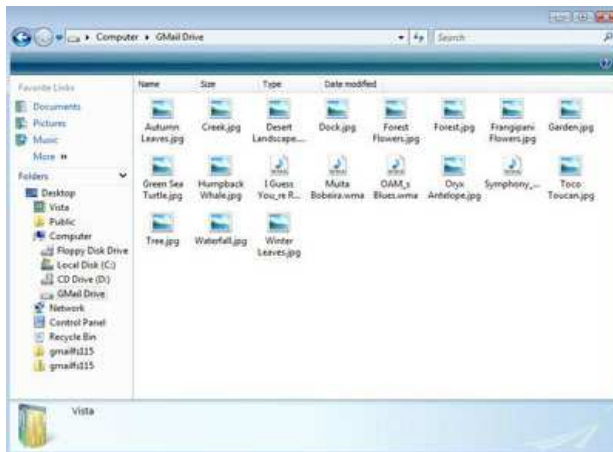
Lastly, check the **Use Draft Folder** option. This will send files to your draft folder instead of cluttering your inbox.

The other option, **Use Proxy Authentication** is only useful if you connect to the internet using a proxy server.

Now that you've checked all the important options, click **OK** to connect to Gmail.

Then you can drag & drop or copy/paste any files to Gmail Drive, and it will send them as email

attachments to your Gmail Drafts folder.



The speed at which you can copy files to and from Gmail Drive will depend on the speed of your internet connection.

Nybbles and Bits

by John Pearce, Chair, WebBoard, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, CO
Glenihan (at) comcast.net <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Last month, I mentioned an article in TechRepublic regarding removing old drivers from your system. Little did I know that issue was going surface in my notebook computer that I upgraded to Win 7. The touchpad on my notebook computer has a vertical scroll area at the right side of the pad. I had no problems using the vertical scroll until I upgraded to Win 7 at which point, it stopped working.

I ignored the problem until just after the January PPCompAS meeting. When I started to investigate and tried to access the settings for the touchpad, there was a pop-up dialogue box telling me that IntelliPoint was blocked from running because of known incompatibilities with Win 7. It took me a few minutes to remember that I had bought a USB mouse and installed Microsoft IntelliPoint software shortly after purchasing the notebook. I had used the USB mouse until I bought a Logitech wireless mouse a year or so ago.

My first thought was to just remove the offending software. Good idea except there was nothing

shown for IntelliPoint in the Programs and Features list and nothing for the USB mouse in the Mice section of Device Manager. Connecting the USB mouse made it appear in Device Manager and caused IntelliPoint to appear in the Programs list. I thought I was close to being done. Surprise, surprise! Trying to perform an uninstall of the software produced the pop-up about IntelliPoint being blocked. I wondered how you could uninstall it if it was blocked from running. This time the pop-up dialogue box provided a link to an update and I performed the update. After the IntelliPoint update completed, the vertical scroll on the touchpad worked correctly. However, I decided to remove IntelliPoint because I no longer use the USB mouse and could not think of a good reason to leave the software installed.

This is the first time I can remember where it was necessary to upgrade software just to remove it. I expect the Win 7 upgrade did not upgrade the IntelliPoint software because the USB mouse was not connected at the time the upgrade was performed. Maybe next time I will remember that USB devices should be plugged in during an upgrade and to make the related software and drivers visible. Even better would be to remove old drivers as TechRepublic suggests.

