

# SCUG



# REPORT

Sarnia Computer User's Group

Est. 1984

[www.scug.ca](http://www.scug.ca)

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October 2005

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS) page 5.

### Digital Photography

Next meeting on Nov. 2nd. 7 p.m. Come out and learn about photo editing and how to take better pictures.

Pierre Houle  
Group Leader  
[digitalsig@scug.ca](mailto:digitalsig@scug.ca)

### Genealogy Group

The next meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 29 at St. James the Apostle Church, 140 Lansdowne North, at Athlone from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The topic will be Marriage Records.

Val Conway  
Group Leader  
[genealogy@scug.ca](mailto:genealogy@scug.ca)

### Windows Computer

Next meeting on Nov. 17th. 7 p.m. Got computer problems? This is the place! All guests are welcome. Please bring a friend.

Pierre Houle  
Group Leader  
[windows@scug.ca](mailto:windows@scug.ca)

### Linux Computer

Next Meeting on Nov. 8. 7 p.m. Come out and see what all the latest hype is about this free operating system that is endorsed by IBM.

Rick Elnor  
Group Leader  
[linux@scug.ca](mailto:linux@scug.ca)

### General Meeting

Next Meeting on Nov. 30th. 7 p.m. SCUG is featuring a Future Shop: "discussion on newer technology and other gizmos coming for Christmas".

We welcome all guests - Please come out, check us out, share and learn

[For detailed info see the back page.](#)

## Executive Board

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## What's New at SCUG

\* SCUG has two new successful SIGS on the go - Genealogy and Linux.

The **Genealogy SIG** has a regular meeting place now and anyone interested in learning the ins and outs of researching your past can contact Val at [genealogy@scug.ca](mailto:genealogy@scug.ca). See page 5 for more.

The **Linux SIG** is going to be a hot item as many companies and individuals are quickly changing over from Microsoft operating systems to Linux. Get in on the ground floor with Rick, the new SIG Leader. Rick also has begun a Linux help email group.

Contact Rick for the full details at [linux@scug.ca](mailto:linux@scug.ca)





**PRESIDENT'S  
PERSPECTIVE**  
by Dorothy Alexander

Have you ever had a problem you could not solve? However, the Internet has an answer for everything!

My daughter and her husband recently returned to Sarnia and bought a house. Along with the house, they inherited an upright piano (in the basement) that they do not want. Since placing the piano in the basement, it is

impossible to remove it given the structural changes to the house. Therefore, we did a "GOGGLE" search and found out how to take the piano apart piece by piece. Anyone for piano parts?

Because of the hot weather, we recently had, the annual fall colour changes seem to be much slower this year than normal. For those of you, who own a digital camera, I hope you will share your prized autumn photos with us on our SCUG web site.

**News!** After a years hiatus we are once again resuming a membership contest. The person who has the most referrals, from new members, will win a year's free membership. SCUG Executive is excluded in this contest.

Since SCUG has a new projector, the executive has decided that we will loan the older model out, to SCUG members, on a case-by-case basis.

What better time of the year could there be, with the holiday season approaching, to find out how to avoid receiving counterfeit money? We are pleased to have Jody Sales, of the Bank of Canada, with us this evening for a counterfeit education presentation.

*Editor's Korner*  
Send Letters to: [editor@scug.ca](mailto:editor@scug.ca)

**SCUG Reviews and Articles**

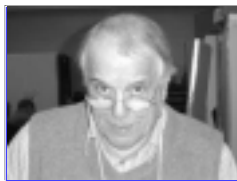
SCUG has several programs up for review and no reviewers. Please consider doing a review of a computer program. These reviews are one of the mainstays of the club.



Greg West - Editor

Many computer companies are prominent supporters of SCUG and rely on us to review their products. These reviews also enable the reviewer to learn more about various aspects of computers and in turn we, the members, also benefit by the knowledge that is thus shared. We need to keep up with the latest products out there and one of the main ways of securing this is to constantly review new products and books. You need not be a computer expert to review a program and in many cases you have loads of time to work on these projects. Of course, there is a vast amount of technical help within our club and you are never further than a phone call or email away from any help.

"Did you know SCUG gets requests from companies to get reviews done. And best of all, you get to keep it after the review is done. Just, log onto the SCUG website ([www.scug.ca](http://www.scug.ca)) as a member, go to TOPICS, then SCUG PERKS. There are over 12 different reviews to be done right now. We are still looking for other reviews on book and software, if you see something new you would like to try and think others would like to know too, contact Norm at SCUG and I will try to get it for you." From Norm Lamoureux, SCUG's Program Coordinator: [coordinator@scug.ca](mailto:coordinator@scug.ca)



## Your Secretary's Notes

by Tom Deeprise  
secretary@scug.ca

SCUG Executive Meeting Oct 3rd, 2005  
at St. James' Church, 140 Lansdowne Rd. North.

1. Approval Of Previous Minutes: Approved as written
2. Membership Input: Jim reported that the Sept. 2005 statistics showed that Membership stood at 91 (plus 41 Associates) with nine Member renewals; one new member and one lapsed. The meeting attendance for Paul's presentation was excellent at about 70, including six guests. The Newsletter -it was decided that an increase to 110 would be appropriate for the Oct. Meeting.
3. Vice President's Input: Ian raised concerns over possible tripping hazards with our use of carpet level power and phone cables at GMs. The question will be raised with the Church Wardens over possible solutions.
4. Secretary's Input: Accommodation at St. James for both Linux and Genealogy has been arranged with the dates to be shown in the NL. The receipt of Thank You cards from Dorothy, for the Exec's sympathy over her broken arm, and The Terry Fox Run, for Norm's provision of our spare projector was noted.
5. Treasurer's Input: Ed's Budget for 2005-2006 was approved, as was the current financial statement.
6. Software Librarian's Input: Pierre reported 49 disks given out. DOM for this month will contain "The Gimp", a photo shop editor and Total Uninstall.
7. Newsletter Editor's Input: Greg sent in a report that emphasized that all Review items must route through Norm to avoid error. Reviews should also be brief, i.e. not more than 600 words in length for the NL and for the supplier of the item. Anything longer can be submitted to the Website. Our monthly column in Business Trends now has a name: TECH TRENDS.
8. Program Coordinator's Input: Norm has eight items in the works for review and will be arranging dead lines.
9. Public Relations Input: Iain - For October we have to the 50/50 draw. For Nov: Since we might have a vendor presentation, we can wait and see. For January - A popular Income Tax Program would be appropriate. Iain will prepare a prototype of a more professional brochure and business cards and estimates of production costs for the Exec. To study.

10. Webmaster's Input: Iain reported that visits to the SCUG Website are lower than early summer at around 132/day but with a noticeable jump when the Greg's article appeared in Business Trends. He again emphasized that he needs the agendas of coming SIG meetings to include on the Website to encourage participation.

11. Meeting Program: September - The presentation by Paul Witheridge on "Who or What is sharing your computer" was very well received with great information and good member participation. For October, there will be a presentation by Jodie Sales from the Bank of Canada on Counterfeiting. For November: A possible presentation by Future Shop: to be confirmed. Ideas for the future: Computers in the medical field, for instance, in Personal Insulin Control, Corel, Linux, Using Quicken etc., the latest AskSam, how do you prepare a DOM? Some of these could be combined as mini-presentations.

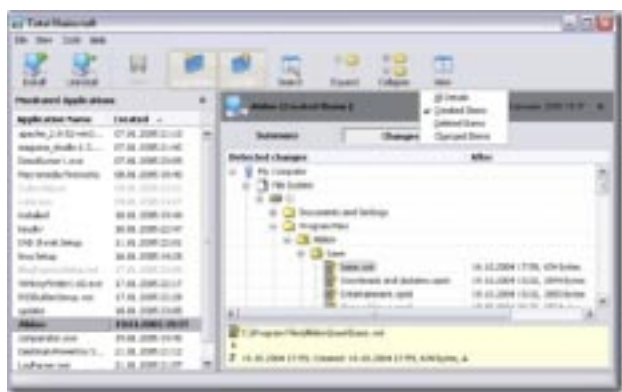
11. Old Business -The purchase of extra equipment for offsite meetings-power cords, power bar etc. Pierre will purchase and the gear will be bagged and made part of the projector package. - Cupboard inventory-done but needs to be depreciated. -HUB Magazine -Currently free but might need to pay S & H later.

12. New Business. -Ian will scan the APCUG site to seek a "best practices" list. -Ian suggested taking the Constitution out of the FAQ section and displaying it more prominently in its own website spot. Iain agreed to do this. -We need to delegate someone to record who the Compuprize winners are and what they won and if the item was donated and by whom. Iain to handle. - It was recommended to form Sub-Group to update the Constitution/ Procedures. Ian volunteered to lead with Iain and Tom as members. Val, with her great knowledge of the subject, will also be asked to participate. - Status of Anthony Chodus demo - combined meeting with Sarnia Photographic Club? Pierre to follow up. Maybe need a bigger venue, such as George Perry School? - Guest Pass problem and how to handle at SIG meetings. It's not feasible for the leader to handle, and a helper is needed. Jim offered a solution with an improved Guest Pass and will attend a couple of SIGs to try it out. - Lending out the old projector to members. Some discussion, with the conclusion to handle it on a case-by-case basis. - It was decided to run a contest in regard to new member referrals, with the one-month's free membership per new member and the winner a free year's membership.

Next executive meeting will be:  
Monday November 7, 2005



This month's offerings on the "Disk of the Month" are a image editing program called G.I.M.P. and an uninstaller called Total Uninstall. G.I.M.P. is a free program that rivals Adobe Photoshop in it's ability to edit images. GIMP has layers, levels, filters, histograms and transformations. Before installing the program, first go to the webpage link on the CD and read the install notes. There are three packages that need to be installed, and they have to be installed in order.



The version of Total Uninstall on the CD is the last freeware version of the program. Paul Witheridge has reviewed the shareware version (which can be found in this publication) and tells me the newer is far superior. T.U. keeps track of changes a program makes when it is installed, and reverses these changes when you choose to remove the program.

Remember, bring in your disk from last month and receive an updated disk free.

Every month a new program is added, and Pierre will briefly demonstrate the program at the SCUG General Meeting.

If you have a shareware you would like to see demonstrated contact Pierre at: [library@scug.ca](mailto:library@scug.ca)

## Windows SIG

Thirt-seven people attended the October Windows SIG including three guests. Pierre started the meeting with a discussion of Shareware and Freeware programs. Everyone was asked to name their favourite programs and to describe why. A few of the more interesting ones were: Mach5 Mail, Moz Backup, TV writer, Mail Washer, NVu. This was followed by a talk on finding lost programs and organizing your desktop. We found that there are as many ways to organize your computer as there are users. The last portion of the meeting was devoted to member's questions. There were many questions involving e-mail program problems. Some questions were even answered!

For a more complete write-up of this meeting, visit the SCUG website and look under Other Areas on the left side, click on Topics, and scroll down and click on Windows Notes.

The next Windows SIG will be November 17th, 7:00 P.M. at Grace United Church, corner of Indian Road and Cathcart Blvd.. The topics will be

- 1) Backups
- 2) Using Google effectively
- 3) Q and A for computer related questions


If you attended the meeting, and left your e-mail address, you will receive an e-mail containing the meeting notes plus all the Q and A. The same notes are posted on the website before the next General Meeting.

## Digital Photography SIG

A lively group of about 35 people attended the second Digital Photography SIG. Pierre led the group with a demonstration of Picasa. Picasa is a photo cataloguing program with many more features. It offers one click picture enhancement, photo e-mail, gift CD creation, cropping, screen savers and much more. Picasa was available on the SCUG monthly CD.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, November 2nd, at St. James Church, 140 Lansdown North, at 7:00 P.M.. The group will continue it's examination of Picasa. Members are encouraged to bring in prints or files of their creations, especially a poster, screen saver, or gift CD. We will go into further detail with the various options in Picasa.

Hope to see you there, and bring a friend.



**Linux SIG**

Rick Elnor  
linux@scug.ca

**The new Linux group is off to a great beginning...**

Our Linux SIG meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of every month. If you would like to receive reminder e-mails for each meeting and haven't attended a meeting yet please e-mail me linux@scug.ca and I will be sure email you a reminder.

Fourteen people attended our first meeting which was held on October 11th. We started off our meeting by defining Linux and Open Source. We then took a look at the Ubuntu Linux distribution and the basics of using Linux with a Graphical User Interface (GUD), following this attendants were shown where Linux users can go for support. To finish off the meeting a questions and answers period took place.

**NEW LINUX SUPPORT EMAIL GROUP:**

A Linux Mailing List has been setup for all SCUG members who would like to discuss any Linux related topics. Members can subscribe at <http://lists.scug.ca/mailman/listinfo/linuxlist>. Subscribers can post a message to the mailing list by emailing linuxlist@scug.ca.

Come out to the next Linux SIG meeting to continue learning the value of Linux and Open Source software.



**SCUG**  
**Compuprize Winner**



Paul Witheridge - 100 Digital Prints From Carman's on London Road  
Anna Harrington - licensed version of Total Uninstall  
Dan Bilger - Hawking Wireless 'G' router

**Genealogy SIG**

Val Conway  
genealogy@scug.ca



Our Genealogy SIG meetings are scheduled for the last Tuesday of every month. If you would like to receive reminder e-mails for each meeting and haven't attended a meeting yet please e-mail me <genealogy@scug.ca> and I will add you to the list.

Twenty-one people attended the first meeting in September. The group was evenly split between beginners and advanced researchers. After filling out a questionnaire giving some background on personal research interests, we talked about "Where to Begin and How to Find Help".

We have started a Genealogy Mail list for all SCUG members who would like to discuss any Genealogy related topics. Subscribe at the Member Information Page: <http://lists.scug.ca/mailman/listinfo/genlist> Once you sign up send your Genealogy e-mail to: Genlist@scug.ca

At the October 25th meeting, we discussed "Death Records and Where to Find Them." We reviewed 20 records that could be used to search for information on the deaths of our ancestors and discussed the value of each kind of record and where to locate them. The meeting notes and links will be on the web site under Genealogy SIG. We have time after the scheduled topic to have a question and answer session.


The next Genealogy SIG meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 29 at St. James the Apostle Church, 140 Lansdowne North, at Athlone from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We will continue with researching vital records. The topic will be "Marriage Records - Where to Find Them".



Val busy at her first Genealogy meeting - great job!!!

**TID BITS**  
 Greg West  
 SCUG Editor

Please send your Tid Bits, or interesting web sites to: [editor@scug.ca](mailto:editor@scug.ca)



**“The Sky’s The Limit”**

Fewer and fewer people today are using that term, and for good reason. In many areas of life there are no limits, including technology. For instance: “As their average commute time rises, North Americans are making their vehicles increasingly homelike, with cushy seats, multiple zones of climate control and DVD players. So it’s no surprise that the next big thing in vehicle accessories is satellite television” (Associated Press). I say, never mind with the TV, how about running WIFI through the FM radio; now that would be a good limit for all of us.



**Gussed This Gadget?**

MP3 player, I presume? Well, you are half-right, partially...Up for a new cell phone and more? Be prepared to see the people around you wired for almost everything: “Sony Ericsson W900 is a high quality fully specified music player, phone and imaging device capable of

super-fast downloads of all types of multimedia – music, video and graphics.” This gadget is a UTMS machine...what the heck is that? It is a “(Universal Mobile Telephone System): Third generation telecommunications system based on WCDMA-DS.” (google search). With a 2 GB card you can listen to over 100finger0 songs while calling your boss to explain why you are late for work again. According to Sony, this Walkman/Phone/etc. is also “an entertainment device the W900 exploits the UMTS-delivered capabilities to the full, delivering fast and smooth download and browsing of video, games, sound and graphics. The high performance 3D Java gaming engine is put to the test with the embedded Asphalt Urban GT 3D from Gameloft, where users can experience the thrills of extreme racing at the wheel of the ultimate sports cars.” What, no WIFI yet? )arn!



**Ok, This One Was An Easy Guess? Sort of...**

Not really; yes it is a USB flash drive, however this baby is much more than your average storage case. This is bionopoly. Say what?

According to gizmodo.com, this is what is known as a fingerprint reader, “the first USB drive with built-in biometric authentication” or a “bio Computer-on a stick.” Most thumb or flash drives will only store your files; Bionopoly does much more and for about the same price as the others. This gadget claims it will “will pave the way for you to do away with the usual start up process of your computer and directly boot to it. This is because the bootable USB flash drive has a built-in operating system of its own. The system further contains OpenOffice to support Microsoft Office files, the Mozilla FireFox web browser, an email client, as well as an instant messaging client which supports services like Yahoo and AOL and a PDF creating program.” Fabulous features, however I am going to wait until they offer more GBs of storage...and the price wars really begin.



**Extra protection for your Firefox**

One of the reasons Firefox is safer than IE is that Firefox does not entertain Active X controls.

Now Firefox gets even safer with a new

"NoScript" control feature. "NoScript" is a program designed for the Firefox browser to allow you to control websites from automatically using JavaScript, Java. You control which sites you want to use these features, the sites you trust such as your "home-banking" web site.

"This whitelist based pre-emptive blocking approach prevents exploitation of security vulnerabilities (known and even unknown!) with no loss of functionality... Experts will agree: Firefox is really safer with NoScript."

"Staying safe has never been so easy!. Experts will agree: Firefox is really safer with NoScript" - <http://www.noscript.net>  
 For all Firefox extensions go to: <https://addons.mozilla.org>

**Convert Your Files to PDF - fast and free**

It doesn't get much simpler to make your own PFD-creations. Some free PDF makers insert advertising or watermarks, but not the CutePDF utility. And to make things even better, this program's "configuration choices are pretty close to nil" (PCWorld November 2005).

Get the full details and program download here: [www.cutepdf.com](http://www.cutepdf.com)



## Letters to the Editor

Please email your letters to  
[editor@scug.ca](mailto:editor@scug.ca)

OPEN LETTER to user group newsletter editors and columnists from Linda Gonse, ORCOPUG (Orange County IBM PC Users' Group) Nibbles & Bits editor  
[editor@orcopug.org](mailto:editor@orcopug.org) [www.orcopug.org](http://www.orcopug.org)

If you read my past Notepad articles in this newsletter, you know how I feel about spyware. This month, I was reading a paid online newsletter by Brian Livingston, when I ran across an article which is excerpted below.

This news is really outrageous. Consumers actually seem only to be pawns in this spyware assault that benefits those who have committed themselves to making profits using unethical methods.

I'd like to enlist the aid of other newsletter editors and newsletter columnists, to alert members and others to this insidious menace. We shouldn't "get used" to it. And, we shouldn't be silent about it. We deserve better.

In fact, as citizens, we should protest this blatant invasion of our privacy, and the vandalism of our personal property. Update Windows Media Player to avoid surprises Late in 2004, computer experts noticed that a popular Windows Media Player video file was actually a silent delivery mechanism infecting millions of PC users with spyware.

On Jan. 3, 2005, security researcher Ben Edelman, [www.benedelman.org/news/010205-1.html](http://www.benedelman.org/news/010205-1.html), revealed what was happening to people who played this video file in WMP. After clicking the OK button on a single, legitimate-looking "browser update" dialog box, "My computer quickly became contaminated with the most spyware programs I had ever received in a single sitting," he said.

Edelman counted an amazing total of 31 programs that had silently been installed, without even displaying a license agreement. These included adware from 180solutions, CoolWebSearch, Ezula, ISTbar, and many other adware companies, he said. (A July 14 report by Brian Livingston, coauthor of Windows 2000 Secrets, and Windows Me Secrets, said that Microsoft's AntiSpyware beta program stopped recommending the removal of programs by 180solutions, Ezula, and some other adware companies to the dismay of spyware experts.)

Microsoft initially said the misleading dialog boxes were

using a "by-design feature" of WMP, which wouldn't be changed. The company then reversed course, telling eWeek <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,1752247,00.asp> in January that a patch would be available by mid-February.

Playing a video file in Windows Media Player can launch a dialog box that looks official but installs spyware.

I'm not pointing to Microsoft as THE one to blame for spyware. But rather saying even a legitimate company's product can be the source of spyware. There is profit in allowing spyware to be distributed with a desirable product.

Ben Edelman also noted on his website that, "As in my prior video of spyware installing through security holes, [www.benedelman.org/news/111804-1.html](http://www.benedelman.org/news/111804-1.html) my records make it possible to track down who's behind the installations - just follow the money trail, as captured by the "partner IDs" within the various software installation procedures. When one program installs another, the second generally pays the first a commission, using a partner ID number to track who to pay. These numbers make it possible to figure out who's profiting from the unwanted installations and, ultimately, where the money is going."

So, who can you trust? Don't say the antispymakers. Several are on the payroll of companies who struck deals to be delisted as spyware!

Apparently, many businesses can't resist the opportunity to make easy cash. It is up to the customers-US, YOU and I - to resist being harvested as a money crop.

Make no mistake, we are the only ones who care about customer rights or privacy.

I've been reminded that keeping Windows updated may help to prevent spyware installations.

But, this is the real world. Not everyone drives with a seat belt fastened, stays alert while standing at an ATM, or keeps Windows updated.

Even if we only write a paragraph a month about any new spyware advance, program, or experience, etc., it will be good. We need to keep reminding our members, our vendors, and our lawmakers that this is something we DO NOT want.

If enough ruckus had been raised at the beginning, spyware might have been stopped in its tracks. Don't make this mistake twice. Raise a ruckus now! And, keep raising it until spyware is declared dead-dead wrong!

Continued on page 8.

Continued from page 7 - Letters.

*There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.*

## Tips for Adding Audio and Video

(for Free) to Your User Group Web Site  
By Phil Shapiro,  
Member of the Capital PC User Group,  
Virginia Macintosh Users Group, Washington  
Apple Pi,  
Young Hackers and Scholars Libre Users Group

When people visit your user group web site, almost all of them want to know the answer to two questions:

Who are these people? What do they care about?

You can try answering these questions with words and pictures. That sort of works. Or you can add audio and video to your user group web site, completely free of charge using the Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org>), and bring your club to life in whole new ways.

I've been experimenting with this in the Virginia Macintosh Users Group and have learned some things worth passing along. You can view the video I uploaded at <http://www.archive.org/details/vmugtestimonials2>. Now I'll explain how I created and uploaded it.

A few years ago I carried my digital camcorder, tripod and some lighting to a VMUG meeting. We meet in the large library of a middle school, so I set up my camcorder in a side area of the library. During the meeting I discretely went around the room asking folks if they wanted to say a few words on camera in support of the club. This was entirely spontaneous and unrehearsed, so the club could best collect people's genuine sentiments.

It didn't take much time or effort to gather these short testimonials. I then edited these testimonials together in iMovie and created an MPEG-1 file from them via the Share option in the File menu of iMovie. (To create an MPEG-1 file you need to have Roxio Toast, a commercial program, installed on your Mac.) It's useful to

note that the file name suffix of MPEG-1 is .mpg

MPEG-1 files can be viewed by Macintosh, Windows and Linux users. These files are admittedly a bit on the large size in terms of megabytes per minute of video. Each minute of MPEG-1 video is 10 megabytes. But their universal viewability is a great attribute.

I uploaded this 9-minute (87 megabyte) file to the Internet Archive. The process of uploading video to the Internet Archive is fairly simple, but let me explain the steps anyway. First you need to create an account for yourself on the Internet Archive. It's free and takes just a few steps.

Then you need to upload your video file or files. I used the popular Fetch FTP (file transfer protocol) program for Macintosh computers. CyberDuck (free) works equally well. On the Windows side of things, SmartFTP is the best free FTP programs I know of.

After logging in to your Internet Archive account, the first step is to create a folder (subdirectory) for each video (or audio) file. The folder name needs to be almost identical to the file name. So if you want to upload the file named `vmugtestimonials2.mpg` your folder name should be `vmugtestimonials2`. (without the period at the end). Next you open the folder you've created (by double clicking on it) and drop the file you want to upload into that folder. The upload process can take a while, even if you have a high speed Internet connection. A rough rule of thumb is that you can upload about 1 to 3 megabytes per minute with most DSL and cable modem accounts. Using a Verizon FIOS (fiber optic) account, you can upload about 12 to 15 megabytes/min.

After the file has been uploaded, you need to wait about 6 to 8 hours before the file is "released." (There are people at the Internet Archive that check to make sure the file was safely received at their side and is not inappropriate.)

The final step is to "Import" the file into the Internet Archive, giving it a detailed file description and including other relevant information, such as who produced it and what the duration of the file is.

You can also choose which Creative Commons license you would like for this file, or whether you'd like to donate your file to the public domain. While Creative Commons licenses are a wonderful invention, donating your file to the public domain might be the most sensible (and least complicated) way to proceed.

After you've imported your file into the Internet Archive, you need to wait just a bit longer (usually just a few

Continued on page 9.

Continued from page 8 - Audio and Video hours -- or less), and then your file will be available for any and all to view -- in perpetuity. (Roughly until when the sun blows up.)

Here's the part you're going to like a lot. If you upload MPEG-1 files to the Internet Archive, and if the file has a suffix of .mpg, then the Internet Archive automatically creates 2 smaller file size versions of this video in MPEG-4 format. One of these smaller sizes is suitable for dial-up users -- although it will admittedly look and sound rather choppy.

The other MPEG-4 version of the file could be viewed by dial-up users with a lot of patience. It takes roughly 5 minutes for a dial-up user to receive one megabyte of downloads, so if your MPEG-4 file is 12 megabytes in file size, a dial-up user could view that file after waiting for about an hour.

Which brings up the point that you probably want to keep your video files less than 10 minutes in duration. Since the Internet Archive is free and gives unlimited storage, you can upload lots of 10 minute videos. The reason to keep files short is that sometimes you can run into synch (synchronization) issues where the audio of the video is not matched up with the lips of the people speaking in the video -- or of the other actions shown in the video. Synch problems seem to crop up most often in the dial-up MPEG-4 files, in my experience.

Suppose you didn't have easy access to a digital camcorder and you wanted to create some video testimonials for your computer user group. Is there any way of doing so? Sure. You can create video files using still digital photos accompanied by audio files. The tool I like best for this is iMovie, the free video editing software that ships with all new Macs. You can likely also use Windows Moviemaker 2, which ships for free with Windows XP computers.

In terms of capturing audio, you can use any laptop and the free Audacity audio recording and editing software. <http://audacity.sourceforge.net>

Or you might want to use a portable digital recorder device. My podcasting friends tell me they like the digital recorders produced by Olympus. The advantage of a portable digital recorder is that you more easily capture that moment when someone has something positive to say at a user group meeting. Naturally, you want to be careful not to disrupt the flow of the meeting, so it might be best to take the person aside during a break - or corner them after the meeting and ask them if they would mind repeating a statement -- they made in the

Continued on page 10.

## Reading Product Manuals Online

By Gabe Goldberg  
APCUG Advisor; Columnist  
AARP Computers & Technology Website

I'm reasonably well-organized; my wife thinks I'm a packrat (she keeps trying to sneak my '70s shirts to the thrift shop). You'd think this would mean that I can find product manuals for every appliance, gadget, PC component and software, etc., I've ever bought. That's mostly true.

But sometimes my filing system fails me. Or I've forgotten to whom I loaned something. Or someone else in the house (but I'm not naming names) has moved it. What then?

Fortunately, manufacturers are increasingly making product literature and documentation available online. While this isn't entirely out of generosity -- it reduces their customer-support workload -- it's great for consumers who can find and read the material.

A good starting place is the manufacturer's Web site. For example, I'm writing this article using a Samsung SyncMaster 912n LCD video monitor. Suppose I need to know what its control buttons do but can't find its manual. Samsung's home page [[www.samsung.com](http://www.samsung.com)] offers a button, "Download Center: Download Drivers, Manuals, Software, and Firmware". I can either enter a product model number or name, or search via product group (audio/video, computers, etc.), then product type, then product subtype, and model name.

Computers are very precise; searching took three tries, since it wanted only "912n", not "SyncMaster 912n". The manual was then available in any of 28 languages, from Bulgarian to Chinese. A PDF file (see below for explanation), it's just under three megabytes, dated about a month ago, complete, 83 pages including clickable Table of Contents. So a minute after deciding to look for it, I'm looking \*at\* it.

Another way to search is via Google [[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)] entering terms like 912n manual site:samsung.com which only searches the samsung.com Web site. This took me to the right neighborhood on the Web site but left me needing a few more clicks to hit the manual. Sometimes search engine results are better than navigating within a site, so consider both techniques.

Manufacturers often update online material as mistakes or shortcomings are found in printed versions, so for important products it's worth checking Web sites occa-

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meeting (or to offer an on-the-spot testimonial.)

Explain what you're going to be using the testimonials for. Most people will gladly give their approval, but you always need to respect the wishes of those who prefer not to have their voice or video used on the web.

Once you have placed your testimonials on the web you'll want to alert your local user group members via your email list, newsletter, or both. You can also alert other user groups to these testimonials via a blog I've set up at <http://usergrouptestimonials.blogspot.com>

Send me a link to the testimonials, along with the name of your user group, and I'll add that link as a posted entry on this blog.

*The user group community needs to seize all opportunities to make itself known to the larger community.*

We are most human when we're engaged in acts of helping one another. The user group community

needs to seize all opportunities to make itself known to the larger community. In time, computer user groups will take on a larger, more central role in society -- perhaps as adjuncts of public libraries, who share the same knowledge-sharing ethic. While it may seem far off in the distance, there may even be a day when computer user groups receive some sort of government funding.

One way to make that happen is to get real serious about documenting the work your user group is doing -- in video and other multimedia forms - on the web. This work needs to be done by more than a few people in each user group.

Phil Shapiro The author works as an independent Macintosh consultant and writer in the Washington DC-area. He can be reached at [pshapiro@his.com](mailto:pshapiro@his.com) and at <http://www.digitaldivide.net/profile/pshapiro> His blog can be found at <http://www.digitaldivide.net/blog/pshapiro> Other articles he has written can be found via his Del.icio.us site at <http://del.icio.us/pshapiro>

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## Moderating a Question and Answer Session

By Bud Bondietti

Editor, Modesto PC User Group  
[www.mpcug.org](http://www.mpcug.org) [editor@mpcug.org](mailto:editor@mpcug.org)

There often are a few thankless jobs within a user group, helping setup and takedown a meeting, being a club officer (sometimes) and being a moderator of specific groups. While attending a user group meeting as a guest, I was especially interested in the topics brought forward by the members during their question and answer session. The group was well attended with a wide range of knowledge from novice (I disdain the word "Newbie") to expert as well as a couple of members who themselves made their living working with computers. The inevitable question popped up, "my computer isn't working properly, who do you recommend that I get to repair it?" One of the members jumped up reached into his wallet producing a business card and handed it to the member. Other members became very silent until the moderator politely said to the member "There are a number of people that I could recommend and if you see me after the session, I would be glad to help you out." Needless to say, I was impressed with the moderators' tact and after the meeting over coffee, I commented to him as to how well he handled the situation. He laughed a little then told me the story of this one member. It seems that he was always looking for a free plug of his business and that most of the members overlooked the interruption. I commented that it didn't seem fair that he be allowed to continue but the moderator said that he'd been doing it so long it became a "way of the club". A little later in our discussion, we got to talking about newsletters. I had not seen any of their newsletters so I didn't know what they contained. As we compared notes, I mentioned that we devote one page of our newsletter strictly for member advertising at no cost to the member. Sort of a benefit of membership, I stated. He looked as though the light bulb lit and said, "Maybe that's the answer to our problem." Two issues later I noticed a page of advertising for member services. Later on I received an email from him and he said that the interruptions had ceased and that when those types of questions came from the floor, he referred the person to that page. Problem solved.

A successful moderator, I have found, should practice two qualities:

- 1) The ruse of "Dazzle them with brilliance or Baffle them with bull" very seldom works. If anything it complicates the problem because the person doesn't get the right answers to solve the problem and

Continued on page 13.

**Total Uninstall**  
**from Martau.com**  
**by Paul Witheridge**  
**Member of SCUG**

<http://www.martau.com>

1.20 MB Download Shareware

30 day free trial \$29.00 US

[support@martau.com](mailto:support@martau.com)

<http://www.martau.com/forum>

### System Requirements

Any Intel-compatible platform running Windows 98SE, Windows Me, Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows 2003. Specific system requirements aren't mentioned, but most modern basic systems with enough room for the temporary snapshot files (potentially about 24MB for each installation) should work fine.

### What is it?

Total Uninstall (TU) provides the means to monitor any/all changes made to your system when installing a new application. It's the answer to "I just installed this great new software but now this other stuff no longer works! What now?" Sure, you could try the old add/remove software -- if the new install is listed there. But typically, that won't remove everything and won't always roll back changes to shared files.

Total Uninstall works by taking a picture ("snapshot") of your system both before and after installing a new application. These two are then compared to determine all changes made to your files and registry entries. These are displayed in a graphical tree view, and then TU stores these changes for use in case you need to uninstall the application. Using the TU 'Uninstall' option will reverse the changes to the previous state. TU has won many awards as you will see at the Martau.com website.

I've used TU for every installation I've made for the past three and a half years and only recently upgraded to version 3. I was very impressed with the new user interface and I \*love\* the ability to simply drag a new application setup file and drop it on my TU icon! With the earlier version, I was always having to type in the name and browse to the location of the file, but the new edition is usually able to extract the name for me and always logs the path to the installer file. In the previous version, you had to be in either 'Install' mode or 'Uninstall' mode, the latter to be able to scroll all previous installations. The new interface allows you to do that easily, as well as be able to review all the recorded changes for each prior installation. One very minor bug

I noticed was that the 'Created' timestamp was always truncated, no matter what view I chose. Only by mouse-hovering over each in turn would reveal all the details. I noticed a similar bug in the display of registry paths under Compare All profiles, but I'm not sure I will be messing in there anyway. Minor, cosmetic stuff.

For most users, the default settings should work well, but if, for example, you have more than one partition (drive) on your computer, you may want to visit Tools|Options|Default Scanning Profile|Folders and add those drives there. You may want to exclude certain folders there as well, but at least make sure that all potential locations for changes are covered.

Aside from the above, clicking the 'Next' button is pretty much all you have to do! You'll see the 'before' snapshot taken and then see your selected application installer appear. Simply proceed through that process as you would normally and don't fret if the installer asks you to reboot in order for the installation to complete. TU will happily survive that reboot and be ready to take its final snapshot after the system restarts and the installation completes.

The list of changes is then presented (expanded view by default) and you can study it in detail to see just how intrusive that new installation was! And you can filter this report with the 'View' option to see only what was changed, only what was added, only what was deleted or all together. I can see this being a very handy new option! Also new is the ability to export the report, export the registry (in case you want to toggle back and forth -- experts only!) or simply print the report. You also get full reports of any uninstalls you may do.

For users of the previous free version of TU (like me), you'll need to download and run tun2to3.exe in order to convert your old snapshot files for use in the new format. But just having access to all the details of those past installations is a definite bonus in my opinion.

The Help files aren't overly detailed, but offer a basic explanation of each item you may encounter. For more extensive help, TU offers user forums and I found author Gavril Martau to be very responsive to the couple of inquiries I made.

I've recommended TU to my friends and clients over the years and this latest version only confirms my faith in it. If you want to retain some control over your system, don't install without it!

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sionally. Sadly, they also sometimes package only abbreviated versions with products, suggesting or expecting consumers to download full versions.

Either way, online manuals are also useful when considering purchases or comparing choices, since they give -- or should give! -- more complete and useful information than is printed on the box. If you're evaluating something pre-purchase, evaluate the manual's organization and quality -- Will you be able to find information you need? Will you understand it? If you're buying something used, online availability of a missing manual can make the acquisition much more pleasant.

Online manuals can be in many formats -- HTML (normal Web pages), Microsoft Word documents, PDF (Portable Document Format), and others. Each format has advantages and disadvantages. HTML is nearly universal; if you can view Web pages you can read HTML documentation. But it may be harder to download and save/organize all pieces of a large document. You'll need Microsoft Word software (or free reader) to read MS Word files. Flexible PDF is becoming the most popular online document format, but it too requires software, Adobe's Acrobat Reader, for viewing. Fortunately, this is free and easy to download/install; visit Adobe [<http://www.adobe.com/>] and click Get Adobe Reader.

Some manufacturers take a different approach, offering search tools and links within their Web sites for different material, such as overviews, tutorials, problem solving tips, even video clips illustrating usage.

Finally, LiveManuals [[www.livemanuals.com](http://www.livemanuals.com)] takes an interesting/interactive approach, providing interactive product demonstrations. Though it doesn't include every product - office equipment and appliances aren't presently well-represented -- the Wish List page accepts nominations for items to add.

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## Screen Shots

By David Garcia  
President, Little Blue PC Club, Northglenn,  
Colorado [petitbleu@comcast.net](mailto:petitbleu@comcast.net)

Have you ever wanted to print out what you see on your monitor screen? This is called a "Screenshot," and there are several software packages on the market that allow you to do just that with various degrees of sophistication. If you don't need that sophistication, you can easily use Windows to get a screenshot. Just follow these instructions:

- 1) Press the Print Screen Key (PrtScr) on the keyboard.
- 2) Click Start, then click Run.
- 3) Type "mspaint" (without the quotes) in the Run box and click OK.
- 4) In Paint, click Paste in the Edit menu
- 5) Click Print Preview in the File menu. If the screenshot is cut off, you may want to change the printer setting to print in Landscape mode.
- 6) Click Print and close Paint. You're done! You can also save the file if you like:
  - 1) Click "Save" in the File menu
  - 2) Browse to the folder you want to save the file in so that the folder name is in the "Save In" box.
  - 3) Type a file name for the screenshot; use JPG in the "Save as Type" box and click Save.

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- Ambient Findability
- Halo 2 Hacks
- Cult of iPod
- Windows Server 2003 Network Administration
- Prefactoring
- Degunking Windows, Second Edition
- eBay: The Missing Manual
- iPod Shuffle Fan Book
- Behind Closed Doors
- Security and Usability
- iLife: The Missing Manual
- Digital Photography Pocket Guide, 3rd Edition
- Oracle PL/SQL Programming, 4th Edition
- TCP/IP Guide
- Cisco IOS in a Nutshell, 2nd Edition

There are many more books to choose from. If you are interested in reviewing a book, please contact: SCUG's Program Coordinator:  
Norm Lamoureux - [coordinator@scug.ca](mailto:coordinator@scug.ca)

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2) If you are hit with a question you or anyone in the audience doesn't have the answer for, politely ask the person to see you after the question and answer session so you can get the question written down for research. Then, follow up. Nothing will turn a member against the club faster than not having their needs met. Be careful not to get bogged down on one question. Time is short and you may miss someone else's need to have an important question addressed.

The moderator should make it a habit of repeating the question for two reasons:

- 1) It assures that the question is correctly stated and
- 2) It helps those who are hard of hearing know what the question is and the resulting answer. Utilize a microphone if need be, otherwise talk clearly and slowly. We often rush to get our answers and people miss the point. If there is more than one "expert" in the group, utilize their talents to help solve questions. Be aware of sideline discussions within the audience, they hamper others from hearing what's going on thus create a need to repeat the question and its answer. There is a wealth of knowledge in our groups, even from the novices. Above all, learn that patience is a virtue. When you show patience, more people will ask questions and the session will flow evenly, sometimes past the time to close discussions.

This article may be used in its entirety provided credit is given the author

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This Section is the Financial Report and is for SCUG members only.



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**NOTE:** Some of these programs are Shareware that come with a trial period, after which, they must be registered and paid for if you like them and decide to keep them on your machine.

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Dec 5	Dec 7	N/A	N/A		
Jan 2	Jan 4	Jan 19	Jan 25	Jan 31	Jan 10
Jan 30	Feb 1	Feb 16	Feb 22	Feb 28	Feb 14
Feb 27	Mar 1	Mar 16	Mar 29	Mar 28	Mar 14
Apr 3	Apr 5	Apr 20	Apr 26	Apr 25	Apr 11
May 1	May 3	May 18	May 31	May 30	May 9
Jun 5	Jun 7	Jun 15	Jun 28	Jun 27	Jun 13

### MEETING LOCATIONS

- \* **Executive and Digital** - St James Church-140 Lansdowne North
- \* **Windows - PC** - Grace United Church, 990 Cathcart
- \* **General Meeting** - St. Bartholomews Church, 718 Cathcart
- \* **Genealogy Meeting** - To Be Announced...
- \* **Linux Group** - St James Church-140 Lansdowne North

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