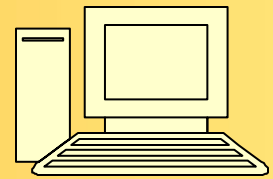


# BAY BYTES

Greater Tampa Bay Personal Computer User Group, Inc.



Newsletter

Issue 1

January 2011

24th Year of People Helping People!



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Don't forget to visit our club's site at:  
<http://gtbpcug.org>

As well Don Miller's and Darrell Manns' :  
<http://www.dmanns.org/dmiller/>

## AVG withdraws Anti-Virus for Windows 7 64 bit computers

AVG has withdrawn their recent update after reports that it caused an infinite loop on Windows7 64 bit systems. Windows7 32 bit systems were not affected.

This is not the first time AVG has had this sort of problem and it probably won't be the last.

Here is the exact error message that is received:

"AVG - Installer Error" "A system restart is required in order to continue with the installation. Please restart your system and try again." Rebooting gets another error message, round and round.

The issue caused a backup on the AVG Official Forums where the following message was issued: "Please be informed that due to the high forum traffic following the release of AVG 2011 and the limited capacity of our moderators, our responses to your posts may be delayed. We are doing our best to answer all posts as quickly as possible." "We offer our apologies for any inconvenience caused by this situation. "

*From AVG.com*

**Your officers for 2011 are:**

President: Jo Ann Brawner



Vice President: B.Brock



Treasurer: Gary Staley



Secretary: Patrick Courtney



Membership:

Program Coordinator: Sherry Foecking



Web Master: Parker Monroe



Newsletter Editor Al Droll



## **Of course, also continuing their support to the club in 2011 are our SIG leaders:**

**Sherry Foecking** with her expertise in MS Office and other office software related subjects.

**Darrell Manns** with his knowledge in Windows XP software, special programs and gadgets applied to the operating system.

**Jerry Harris** always has answers where the Internet and Networking are concerned. He also answers questions on other subjects as well.

**Parker Monroe** the all-round PC man seldom gets stuck with questions he does not have answers for.

Not to forget all the others filling in to lend a helping hand to make the evening a success.

At the December 7th class/meeting the officers were elected by a unanimous vote. During this class/meeting Mr. Ray Alvarez and his assistant introduced the members to the fairly new concept of wireless Internet called "Clear" with a up to 4G connection speed. Also at the end of the silent auction the new owner was announced for the club's Compaq laptop.

# GTBPCUG Christmas Dinner



**2010**

Submitted  
by Frank  
Weitzman



## Is Your Internet Security up to Date?

**Antivirus up to date?**

**Firewall?**

**Windows up to date?**

**Spy Ware?**

**See how to protect your computer at:**

<http://www.gtbpcug.org/protect/>



### More about Internet Threats

#### Online Peril: Avoid "Status Jacking"

<http://daol.aol.com/>

"Status jacking" -- or the act of literally hijacking someone's Facebook page and posting random status updates -- is such a common occurrence that it has even garnered a mention in the Urban Dictionary.

While browsing Facebook, for example, you may have stumbled upon bizarre posts from a friend, which range from harmless updates to more malicious content written by hackers who have hijacked an account.

In a [recent article](#), we cited an MSNBC story from last year about a Microsoft employee whose Facebook account was hacked by thieves. Posting alarming updates about how the victim had been robbed overseas, they urged his friends to send money, some of whom did.

As [Time magazine](#) reported in May 2009, online scams have evolved from emails to social-networking sites where unsuspecting users who may be otherwise cautious about clicking on suspicious links in emails may not practice the same caution when browsing Facebook.

In more recent news, the rise of denial-of-service attacks has temporarily crippled various corporate websites. As [AOL News](#) reports, as a response to MasterCard's decision to withdraw its services from controversial WikiLeaks, hackers attacked the company's website.

#### Hacking dangers

A number of sites have had their share of hacking problems. This October, for example, the Atlantic Wire and other news sources also reported that a web-developer had designed a program called Firesheep, specifically designed to instruct users on how to hack others' Facebook accounts.

*Continued on the next page*

### How to prevent status jacking

Though status jacking and hacking social-networking accounts may qualify as sport for some, they pose great dangers for the victims whose accounts have been hacked.

According to the online reputation-management firm ReputationDefender, there are two types of status jacking: either onsite or remote. **Onsite jacking** is usually motivated by people you know and who have access to your computer. An easy way to prevent this is to log out of your account when you are away from the computer and to continuously change your password.

**Remote jacking** is more dangerous because as ReputationDefender explains, it's generally the handiwork of malicious hackers who illegally gain access to your account information via phishing and other scams.

There are steps you can take to [guard against status jacking](#), the most important of which is to avoid using public computers -- such as those at Internet cafes and libraries. These may not be equipped with tight computer security and are easily accessible by scores of users.

On sites such as Facebook, it's best to keep your profile visible only to those on your friends' list. Users sometimes make the mistake of "friending" hundreds -- sometimes thousands -- of random people in order to bulk up their friends' list, but to protect your privacy and ensure your account remains safe, only befriend people you actually know. In addition, it's best to keep your profile private by adjusting the proper privacy settings.

Clicking on suspicious links could prove fatal for your online safety. In the digital era where phishing and pharming scams are rampant, exercising caution when encountering an unknown link or website is key. That legitimate-looking email from your financial institution could well be the handiwork of a hacker who is looking to gain access to your credit card or banking information. Today, suspicious-looking links are also scattered on social-networking sites. Before clicking on that link posted on your friend's status update, make sure the post appears legitimate, and be wary of downloadable applications.

### The consequences

Though in this day and age our privacy may be a lost cause, guarding your online reputation and protecting against malicious online predators and hackers is still a concern.

A September Agence-France Presse story, for example, reported that approximately 57,000 scam websites are created every week -- a staggering number that should serve as a red flag to anyone who spends time online. Social-networking is a phenomenon that is here to stay, but it comes with risks. The protocol of social-networking now requires a dose of stringent security every time you "friend" an acquaintance or click on a link.

## Some things to look into...

<http://www.winstep.net/nexus.asp>

Winstep helps you to keep your desktop clutter free, for FREE. You need a tidy place to store and access your important programs. A dock holds shortcuts in a tidy strip. They can be accessed with a single click. Nexus brings a full-featured dock to your PC. Just drag and drop shortcuts to the dock. Then delete them from your desktop. You'll always know where your favorite programs are. And you'll have a clean desktop. For Windows 7, Vista and XP.

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/default.aspx>

This site might have some useful information not only for the IT Pro, but the average computer user also will benefit from it.

<http://firefox.afterthedeadline.com/>

This Firefox add-on checks your writing all over the Web. It works almost anywhere you enter text. That includes comment sections, forums, social-networking sites and more. It'll fix any spelling and grammar faux pas. But you can also have it check your style. That includes pointing out passive voice, clichés, double negatives and more. It'll help you say exactly what you mean to say online.

<http://tinyurl.com/25hjokm>

Not yet decided on a replacement for your old digital camera? This WX5 point'n shoot camera from Sony has lots of special features including 3D capabilities.

<http://www.yorkphoto.com/york/welcome>

The new year has arrived and new calendars are replacing the old ones. For some one who still wants to personalize his or her calendar with family pictures or pictures from last years vacation trip can check out this site. Still time. The year has just begun.

<http://www.komando.com/toolbox.aspx?mode=print&id=7980>

In case your new LCD monitor screen should have a scratch or any other minor damage, this site might give you a tip how to fix it.

<http://www.windowssecrets.com/comp/101216/> This site could be of interest to the ones that upgraded to Windows 7 and like to improve on it with these 10 tweaks.



## Create a family site for sharing recipes and more

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

**Q.** I remember you giving instructions on creating a family Website. At age 58, I am the current president of our family. Next summer will be our 60th family reunion. I would like to do something special for the occasion. I was hoping to make an economical and secure Website. I'd like to let family members upload photos, stories, recipes, etc. That way, we can share all of these things and even print them out. Thanks.

**A.** What a great idea, Tom. Creating a family Website is an excellent way to share and store priceless memories. Of course, there are a number of tools out there to get your family's Website going. The trick, as you wisely pointed out, is finding one that's secure. Sites like Wordpress and Facebook have made it extremely easy to have a Web presence. But neither of these sites is a really good choice for a family Website.

These sites were created to broadcast information all over the Internet. That's certainly not what you want to do with personal, private family data.

But don't worry. I've found a perfect solution for you. It's called Chattertree. You can create a free, private social network just for your family. It's a bit like Facebook. You can chat, send messages, and upload photos and video. The major exception is that only certain people are allowed to view these. Chattertree lets you create customizable forums. These forums are called rooms. You can make as many rooms as you want. And each room has its own settings. For example, you can choose to make a parents-only room or an immediate family room.

These rooms add a great deal of security. You can be certain that the information you put in a room stays in the room. Only the people you choose to be there can access your rooms.

In a room, users can upload photos and video and talk about upcoming family events. For example, you could make a room dedicated to your upcoming family reunion.

Speaking of your reunion, Chattertree is also great for keeping track of events. There is a calendar feature as well. You can enter birthdays, family outings or vacations. You name it. As the date approaches, a reminder is sent to everyone involved. It's an awesome tool to coordinate special events. Chattertree even includes a built-in video chat feature. This lets you video conference with up to six different people. You don't have to install and set up a separate program. All you need is a Webcam.

Haven't talked with your siblings on the other coast in a while? Want grandma to see the new baby but don't have time for a vacation? Video chat is perfect for situations like these.

You can also use an Alerts feature. This is a quick way to send urgent messages to either your whole family or selected groups. The site can send alert messages via e-mail or text message. It's a great way to get your whole family up-to-speed in a hurry.

*Continued on the next page*

One last neat feature of Chattertree is the Chattertree Store. This is a marketplace of over 300 online stores. You can purchase gifts for birthdays, anniversaries or holidays. Chattertree even gives each family member a personalized Gift Corner. In the Gift Corner, family members can make wish lists of things from the store.

Is your nephew graduating soon? Just head over to his Gift Corner and you can see exactly what he wants. You'll never have to worry about buying the wrong gift again!

Tools like Chattertree are extremely helpful for creating a safe family space. But maybe you want the satisfaction of building your own site. I can help with that, too:

- Building a Website doesn't need to be difficult. In fact, it can be a lot of fun. [Click here](#) to get started.
- If you're building a site, make sure you've protected it as well. Learn [how to add](#) a password to your family site.
- Creating a Website from scratch requires some advanced software. [Download](#) a good, free alternative to expensive programs.



## Windows XP: Looking back, looking forward

By Fred Langa

**On October 22, Microsoft pulled the plug on sales of Windows XP, ending the operating system's spectacular nine-year run.**

With no new copies being sold, support for XP will start to decline. Fortunately, XP's long run has produced a ton of collected wisdom: everything you need to keep your copy going strong and — when ready — to help you move on.

The end of XP is a watershed moment. It's truly the most successful operating system in the history of personal computers. Windows 3.x was great in its day; it gave mass-market, affordable PCs the graphical prowess Microsoft needed to compete with the more expensive Macintosh computers. But it lasted only five years, from 1990 to 1995. XP's reign was twice as long!

The Windows 9x family (95 and 98) were also stellar OSes. Windows 95, released in 1995, introduced Windows Explorer for file management and was the first Windows to exploit the power of 32-bit hardware. And it added TCP/IP networking as an integral (not bolted-on) component of the OS.

Windows 98, delivered in 1998, was the first Windows to integrate Internet Explorer. Because it was essentially free, IE quickly ignited industry controversy and ensuing legal battles for Microsoft. But as part of the Windows package, it helped with the explosive growth of the Web and the *dot-com* boom of the late '90s.

In 2000, five years after the launch of Windows 95, Microsoft — late getting its next operating system out the door — released the stopgap kludge Windows ME (short for Millennium Edition; it was soon given less-charitable labels). It landed with a resounding thud. Even Vista was more popular than ME.

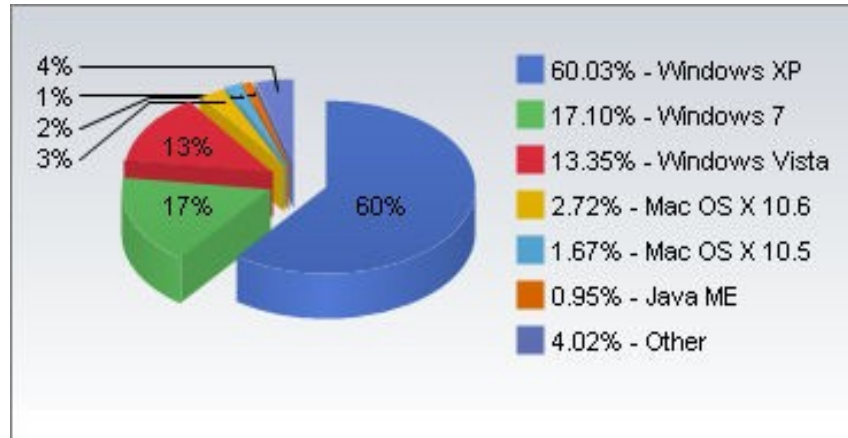
So Windows XP's *near-decade* reign is impressive. Rolled out in 2001, it blended the familiar interface conventions of Windows 98 with the heavy-duty, business-oriented underpinnings of Windows NT (New Technology). The result was a hybrid operating system that looked good, was easy to use, and — most important — was far more stable than its predecessors.

Microsoft originally planned a five-year life span for XP. But delays and missteps with XP's successor products (Vista, for example) plus huge upgrade resistance from users forced Microsoft to extend XP's life again and again. Now, with Windows 7 proving itself a worthy replacement, Microsoft finally has the opportunity to retire its aging, war-horse operating system. The October 22 end for XP occurred almost exactly one year after Win7 rolled out.

XP is going out on top. According to NetMarketShare.com (home page) — which tracks operating systems actually in use online — XP still holds a commanding 60.03% market share, as shown in Figure 1.

*Continued on the next page*

**Figure 1. XP use is declining, but based on a recent NetMarketShare.com. chart, it's still the dominant OS by far.**



XP is losing about 1% to 2% market share per month; Win7, coming on strong, is currently in second place at 17.10% and is growing at 2% to 3% per month. And because many businesses passed on Vista, there's a huge pent-up market for Win7 upgrades — so its share of Windows users will grow even more rapidly.

#### **XP will get security patches until April 2014**

Now that software development on XP has stopped, the most important question for XP users is future support. Microsoft plans no further Service Packs or feature enhancements for the OS. But given the astounding number of people still using XP, Microsoft says it will provide XP security updates through April 2014. (See Figure 2.) That should give large businesses sufficient time to complete their Win7 migration.

In addition, Microsoft's knowledge base will continue to host XP-related information for at least that long. That's an astounding 13 years after the OS was first released. To my knowledge, that's a record — the longest-supported run of any major personal computer operating system by any company, ever!

**Figure 2. A condensed view of Microsoft's XP lifecycle chart shows support for the OS ending in 2014 (circled in yellow).**

Microsoft Product Lifecycle Search				
Products Released	General Availability Date	Mainstream Support End Date	Extended Support End Date	Service Pack Support End Date
Windows XP Home Edition	31/12/2001	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	30/08/2005
Windows XP Media Center Edition 2002	28/10/2002	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	30/08/2005
Windows XP Media Center Edition 2004	27/10/2003	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	10/10/2006
Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005	30/12/2004	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	
Windows XP Professional	31/12/2001	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	30/08/2005
Windows XP Professional x64 Edition	24/04/2005	14/04/2009	08/04/2014	14/04/2009

#### **Microsoft included many keys to XP's success**

In addition to the ease-of-use and stability enhancements mentioned earlier, XP had other features and innovations that made it a winner.

*Continued on the next page*

For example, XP was the first Windows with so-called *intelligent* taskbar and notification-area behavior. (The taskbar contains the Start button and the icons representing running programs; the notification area, the small block in the lower-right corner of the Windows screen, contains the clock and icons for background tasks and services.) When your taskbar runs out of space, XP intelligently overlays similar icons on top of each other and suppresses inactive notification icons.

That might not seem like a big deal now, but it was a major innovation in its time — one that made using many programs vastly simpler. In fact, XP's overall user interface may be the most imitated ever. If you don't believe me, check out almost any desktop Linux and see how familiar the UI seems.

XP was the first Windows to ship with built-in CD-R burning software; first to include user-configurable power management; first to ship with a built-in backup tool; and first to ship with ClearType, a screen-legibility enhancement — all features we take for granted now.

XP was the first Windows with a complete and genuinely useful Help system that replaced the rudimentary Help in Win9x. It was also the first Windows with Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop built in. And it was the first consumer/desktop Windows to support the advanced NTFS (info page) file system, which avoided the fragility and size limitations of the FAT system used in previous desktop Windows versions.

You can probably add your own list of favorite XP features.

### **XP's many blemishes are well documented**

No one who has used XP for any length of time will call it flawless, however. Many of those flaws — and ways to work around them — have been detailed in Windows Secret's weekly reports.

When XP first appeared, many PCs of the day had insufficient power for the new OS, causing it to run painfully slow on those systems. And on all hardware, XP could consume ridiculous amounts of disk space for the recycle bin, Internet Explorer cache, and System Restore.

It also buried some truly useful features in places where they were hard to find and access.

Just one small example: Window 7's Backup applet is easily found in the Control Panel's top-level menu. XP Professional's Backup app is located deep inside All Programs, in the System Tools menu. In XP's Home edition, Backup isn't even installed by default — users have to dig it out of the `\Valueadd\Msft\` folder on the setup CD and perform a manual installation!

Fortunately, after almost a decade of use, nearly all of XP's worst problems and limitations have been addressed in XP's Service Packs, with third-party add-ons and tools, and through a wealth of published tips, tricks, and workarounds.

In the August 12 Top Story, "Preparing Windows XP for the long haul," I provided tips on how to keep XP going for as long as you need it. The rest of this article builds on that: it's a compendium of some of the most useful XP information from the past decade, all in one convenient reference.

You'll also find links to help you upgrade smoothly to Windows 7 when the time comes. And at the end, you'll see how to keep your favorite — and possibly essential — XP software alive and running well inside Windows 7, just as it runs now.

*Continued on the next page*

## Keep your XP environment *inside* Windows 7

Windows 7 offers two ways to keep older software running well inside the new OS. The first, its Program Compatibility settings, is explained in the MS article, "What is program compatibility?"

The Program Compatibility settings take care of the majority of compatibility issues. But for programs that need more, you can get the free "Windows XP Mode" software for Windows 7 Professional and Ultimate at its Microsoft download site.

Win 7's XP Mode sets up a complete, free, already-licensed, self-contained XP virtual PC that runs *inside* Windows 7. When you install software on the XP virtual machine, the software thinks it's running on a regular, stand-alone XP box! Everything behaves in the normal XP way, so applications work the way you're used to.

XP mode gives you the best of both worlds: you can retain and run your older XP-based software but still get all the benefits of using Win7!

Once you try the new Win7 interface, I think you'll like it. But if you don't, Woody's Windows' April 1 article, "Classic Shell puts XP retro back into Win7," shows you how to recreate the familiar XP look and feel in Windows 7.

## Windows Secrets XP setup/maintenance articles

Here are some of the best XP-related stories available in the [windowssecrets.com](http://windowssecrets.com) library:

- "Recover lost disk space by dumping dump files," [Langelist Plus](#), Feb. 12, 2009
- "Access more memory, even on a 32-bit system," [Top Story](#), Dec. 18, 2008
- "How to maintain XP after Microsoft ends support," [Top Story](#), Nov. 13, 2008
- "Slimmed-down Windows XP delivers big benefits," [Woody's Windows](#), Oct. 9, 2008
- "Keep XP fresh until Windows 7 arrives," [Top Story](#), May 15, 2008
- "Make a bootable thumb drive that runs XP," [PC Tune-Up](#), March 27, 2008
- "More free ways to enhance Windows XP," [Known Issues](#), July 26, 2007
- "XP's powerful 'Tskill' and 'Taskkill' commands," [LangaList](#), March 15, 2004
- "How to move a Windows XP installation to different hardware," [Support Alert](#), 2002
- "Recovery console life saver," [LangaList](#), April 18, 2002

## The lighter side

The reason computer chips are so small is computers don't eat much.

*Lorenzo*

There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in their home.

*Ken Olson, President & Founder, Digital Equipment Corp., 1977*

The word user is the word used by the computer professional when they mean idiot.

*Dave Barry*

When the computer asks you, "Are you sure?", ponder for a moment.

*A Secretary*

Who is General Failure and why is he reading my hard disk? -

*Author Unknown*

Working in an office with an array of electronic devices is like trying to get something done at home with half a dozen small children around. The calls for attention are constant.

*Marilyn vs. Savant*

You can go and find a mailbox right now, open the door to a tin box - tin door, no lock - with unencrypted information in English, sealed in a paper-thin envelope with spit, yet people are worried about online privacy.

*Scott McNeely, CEO, Sun Microsystems*

*One of the articles appearing in this issue was sent to the editor by: Charlie Vanderford*

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