



# THE BUSSLINE

(BUSSLINE is the term for the complex multi-functional circuitry on a computer motherboard, a PC's heart.)

Vol. 114 No. 7

Newsletter of the Central Florida Computer Society, Inc. [Non-Profit, 501(c)3]

July 2014

## Free John re: TeamViewer

**Sunday, July 13:** Our presentation today will feature the free program *TeamViewer* and will be provided to us by John Kennedy, whose interesting factoids appear below:\*



John "Free John" Kennedy got his start with computers around the beginning of the 80's and has been hammering away on them ever since his first Atari computer, to the one that he totally built

when he retired six years ago. His last ten years of teaching was with middle schools helping them develop the necessary computer skills they would need in education. After retiring he become involved with teaching computer skills to senior citizens through a partnership of the Licking County Computer Society (of which he is the co-leader of the LInux SIG/Help Desk and now chair of the Teaching Program) with the Licking County Aging Program. Although having switched mainly to the Linux operating system, John continues teaching Windows classes and helping people with their Windows computer problems.

Known around his



### By now you should be used to our **New Meeting Place, Date, and Time!**

Due to the change of our monthly meeting to a new place, Maitland Library, the CFCS Board of Directors had to change the WEEK of each month's meeting to the SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH. This was necessary because the third Sunday, our traditional meeting date, was not available. Once you attend a meeting and experience the atmosphere and appointments of our new venue, you will be happy we made the choice. The Board sincerely hopes everyone will make the adjustment with ease.

Also, since the library does not open until 1 pm, **our meeting will begin at 1:15 (WinSIG) and end by 5**, to give us time to straighten up before the library's 5:30 closing.

The Maitland Library is located at 501 South Maitland Ave.,

### The Inside Stories:

- 2. Special Interest Groups
- 4. Recycle Bin
- 4,5. CFCS Details, phone numbers, Renewals
- 6. Broadband Internet Access: U.S. Not So Good  
HELP WANTED! **Last Chance!** Stan Too!
- 10. Better Storage Ways than your Desktop
- 12. Caveat Emptor: Buying Old Hardware
- 13. Prez Sez; Browser Wars Intensify Again
- 16. BitCoin— A New Currency?
- 18. A Good Password Manager to Enhance Security
- 22. Helpline: Numbers to call for help
- 23. Calendar for the next few months
- 24. **Directions to the monthly general meeting**

area as "Free John", he specializes in using free software for most of his computer projects (including the free Linux operating system). One of his top, if not the top, pieces of software is "TeamViewer". With this free software, John is able to provide remote technical help/support to both Windows and Linux users from the comfort of his office chair in his basement office. TeamViewer allows him to "see" exactly what problems people are experiencing where explaining just doesn't get the job done. Any former Northerners (and current snowbirds from the north) will understand how great this might be when someone needs help during the middle of the winter, given the frequent bad weather or roads. John will share how TeamViewer works as both a remote support tool working with others, and provides him remote access to his computers back home when he is away.

If there's time he will also show how you can use TeamViewer as a presentation/training tool to show others how to do things.

John is a member of the Licking County Computer Society located in Newark, Ohio (central Ohio, east of Columbus), and a member of APCUG. He is also on APCUG's Speaker's Bureau offering presentations on TeamViewer, Skype, Free Software, Portable Apps, and Linux.

\* Please note how I avoided the "Keep on ticking" puns. Seriously, this talk looks to be of great interest. I have a brother in Northern Michigan who makes his living by remotely fixing client's computers with programs such as this, a necessity in winter, and in places like Fargo, ND, a literal lifesaver, even in summer. Ed.

**Earlier on the same day of each presentation, the WINDOWS Special Interest Group (SIG) meeting is held.** The WinSIG now meets at 1:15 pm, and is hosted by Hewie Poplock, former president of both CFCS and FACUG, and author of Hewie's Views and Reviews. Hewie, who has led the Central Florida Computer Society WinSIG for over 15 years, will start a little more than an hour before the CFCS General Meeting.

If you use or plan to use Windows, these discussions, demonstrations, and Q&A sessions will be of immense value to you. Geared to intermediate level Windows users, tips, tricks, and information on all versions of Windows are discussed. An e-newsletter is sent periodically

with meeting information and links discussed at the meeting. You need not attend both meetings, but many members do. Non members are always welcome. Sign up for the free e-newsletter at [cfcs.org](http://cfcs.org).

Hewie's Blog and many useful articles (including the meeting notes below) can be found at <http://hewie.net/>

The CFCS website is at <http://www.cfcs.org>. Be sure to check it out for up-to-date information.

Here is what Hewie talked about last month:

## Meeting Notes 2014-06-08 WinSIG

Submitted by Hewie Poplock on Sat, 2014-06-07 21:12

Learn to Decipher the Blue Screen of Death and Troubleshoot Your PC <http://lifehacker.com/learn-to-decipher-the-blue-screen-of-death-and-tro...>

Blue Screen of Death Survival Guide: Every Error Explained [http://www.maximumpc.com/article/features/blue\\_screen\\_death\\_survival\\_gui...](http://www.maximumpc.com/article/features/blue_screen_death_survival_gui...)

How to tweak File Explorer and customize your Windows experience <http://www.pcworld.com/article/2241982/tweak-file-explorer-just-the-way-...>

5 Ways Overzealous Cleaning Can Break Windows <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/5-ways-overzealous-cleaning-can-break-windows/>

How to Boot Your Computer from a USB Flash Drive <https://craftedflash.com/info/how-boot-computer-from-usb-flash-drive>

10 Useful DuckDuckGo Instant Answers That Save You Time & A Few Clicks <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/10-useful-duckduckgo-instant-answers-save-t...>

6 Cool DuckDuckGo Features You Won't Find On Google <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/6-really-cool-things-you-can-do-with-duckdu...>

What's new on DuckDuckGo <https://duckduckgo.com/whatsnew>

Create Reminders On Your Desktop. No Software Required. <http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/create->

reminders-your-desktop-no...

The Essential Tips for Buying Used Stuff (Without Getting Screwed) <http://lifehacker.com/the-essential-tips-for-buying-used-stuff-without-g...>

Tails is a live operating system, that you can start on almost any computer from a DVD, USB stick, or SD card. It aims at preserving your privacy and anonymity, and helps you to: use the Internet anonymously and circumvent censorship; all connections to the Internet are forced to go through the Tor network; leave no trace on the computer you are using unless you ask it explicitly; use state-of-the-art cryptographic tools to encrypt your files, emails and instant messaging.

<https://tails.boum.org/>

Copyright 1995-2011 Hewie Poplock

Bring your questions about Windows or any computer questions to be fielded by a room full of computer enthusiasts. The questions will be answered during the Windows SIG or during the "Askit Basket" portion of the main meeting. We even have a few lurking Mac owners, and when we turn off the lights to better view the presentations, you may notice the glow of numerous iPods in the crowd. CFCS was the first to put the 'YOU' in USER-friendly!

### **Don't forget to list your items for sale on CFCS' TECHcetera for SALE SIG!**

Officially classified as a Special Interest Group (SIG) chaired by Mike Ungerman (whose brainchild it was), the **TECHcetera for SALE SIG** allows members (only) to post any items they may have for sale or items that they would like to purchase or trade, or just give away. Similar to the existing CFCS Tech-SIG and CFCS iSIG groups, members of the group may send an email to the group address, and it will be sent out to other members either as an immediate email or as a daily digest of emails from that day.

**FYI: This SIG has been merged with the Tech-SIG mailing list, and will be discontinued as a separate mailing; so if you wish to continue to receive notifications of all the HOT tech items for sale, and are not on the Tech-SIG list, email Stan at [tech-sig@cfcs.org](mailto:tech-sig@cfcs.org)**

Membership in the group is limited to Tech-SiG members only, so we won't be getting spam listings. Any members desiring to take advantage of an offer or re-

quest will be doing so between themselves. CFCS is not a party to the transaction, nor a mediator if there is a dispute over an item or payment. There are no restrictions as to what a member may post to sell, so perhaps it's time to clear out that garage, back room, attic, etc. You can even announce a garage sale if you want to get rid of a lot of stuff!

## **OUR OTHER SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIG)**

**The ACCESS, MS OFFICE, and SECURITY SIGs** meet conjointly on the second Wednesday of each month from 7 to 9 pm at the New Horizons Learning Center at 1221 Lee Rd. Arvin Meyer, a Microsoft MVP (Most Valuable Professional), leads the SIG. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cfcs-access> This is a combination of three separate SIGs which now meet conjointly.

**The VIRTUAL DIGITAL PHOTO & VIDEO SIG** lead has been assumed by Ken Larabee and it meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month, virtually. To register go to <https://apcug.ilinc.com/perl/ilinc/lms/event.pl> Choose Virtual Photo SIG.

**The TECH DISCUSSION SIG** meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 7 to 9 pm at the World Gourmet Restaurant, 800 E. Altamonte Dr. (436) SIG leader is Vice President Stan Wallner.

This SIG is a non-structured, open conversational group for CFCS members, that has no specific topic or



**Sanford store is located at 1617 WP Ball Blvd. in the Marketplace of Seminole Town Center (407-688-7627). Near Target; between Bright Now Dental & Firehouse Subs**

**Apopka store is in Victoria Plaza, at 1087 W. Orange Blossom Trail. (407-814-3935) This is just past the 429, in the same Plaza as the Harbor Freight. Both open 9-7 Mon.-Sat. Closed Sundays**

**5% discount on most non-sale items for CFCS members, and 10% on service for CFCS members**

speaker, but is simply a round table discussion. It is not an advanced group, but a place for people to come and discuss various tech subjects, such as new products and technologies, hardware, software, web-related, etc.

Bring in articles from magazines, newsletters, unusual problems/situations that have arisen, questions, etc. Also, new or ailing devices or notebook pc's are welcome, either for "show and tell" or discussion or demo of situations.

A screen and projector are available, but not always there. If you want it to demo something, please E-mail: [tech-sig@cfcs.org](mailto:tech-sig@cfcs.org) a day or 2 ahead.

Another feature of this SIG is the Tech-SIG Yahoo Group mail. We now have 64 people communicating through this, with tips and tricks, "Ask-It Basket" type questions, etc. Also, a second, on-line VIRTUAL meeting of the TechSIG is being experimented with on the second Tuesday of each month. Co-hosted by Mike Ungerman and Stan Wallner, it may attract a long distance audience. Stay tuned to the e-Blast for times and details - it is not yet permanently scheduled, but will be announced in the e-BLAST and on the Tech-SIG Yahoo Group mail. If you are not on that list and want to be, please E-mail: [tech-sig@cfcs.org](mailto:tech-sig@cfcs.org)

**The iSIG** meets on the third Monday of each month

1505 East Colonial Drive, Orlando FL 32803. This building is located across from the Publix on Colonial Drive in the Colonialtown section of downtown Orlando. They have secured WiFi, and vending machines are available. The iSIG meetings cover the products that use the iOS, which includes the iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch. This is a combined effort of the Central Florida Computer Society [http:// www.cfcs.org](http://www.cfcs.org) and the Florida Macintosh Users Group [http:// www.flmug.com](http://www.flmug.com). Other groups are invited to participate. Attendees are consumers, developers, consultants, and publishers, who find common interests and discuss how to handle topics from both the consumer & the developer perspectives. The SIG leader is Sean Kane, Certified Apple Technical Coordinator, long-time Mac and iOS user, and a technologist and consultant to [The Walt Disney Company](#).

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewal invoices will be e-mailed from [treasurer@cfcs.org](mailto:treasurer@cfcs.org) approximately thirty (30) days prior to your membership expiration. Invoices will be snail mailed to members for whom there is no e-mail address in the membership database and to those members whose e-mail was returned to [treasurer@cfcs.org](mailto:treasurer@cfcs.org) for any reason. Please help us by adding this address to your contacts list and setting your spam filter to let our message get to your inbox. We do not share your e-mail address with others (We hate that too!), but it is necessary for full participation in the Society, including receiving your newsletter.

Members will be requested to renew their membership by paying dues on time. Dues may be paid by cash or check at the meeting, by PayPal at <http://www.cfcs.org/membership/membership.php> or by mailing a check to:

### CFCS

**Address:** PO Box 520084,  
Longwood, FL 32752

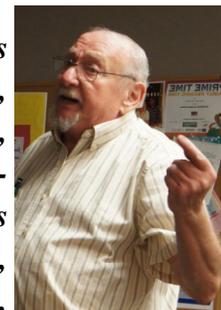
If you do not receive a renewal invoice, lose it or have questions about your dues and or membership status, please inquire at the sign-in table or send an e-mail to: [treasurer@cfcs.org](mailto:treasurer@cfcs.org).

**Membership Cards:** A new membership postcard with the membership card included for the next year will be distributed at the meeting following your renewal. The Cards will be mailed to those members who request same by e-mail to [treasurer@cfcs.org](mailto:treasurer@cfcs.org).

## The Recycle Bin

by Stan Wallner,  
Vice President, CFCS

*Stan, a CFCS member since 1984, has served in many offices over the years, and is now Vice President Separately, he is a local IT consultant, "PC Doctors Make House Calls," offering his services on-site, at your office or home, for PC and Laptop Upgrades, WiFi, Networks, Virus & Spyware Removal, and Troubleshooting on both hardware & software, at reasonable rates (with discounts for CFCS members!). You can reach him at [smwallner@gmail.com](mailto:smwallner@gmail.com) or by phone at 407-862-2669.*



This is a MOST important issue regarding our environment, and can't be over-emphasized! It is an area that is changing frequently. It will be on the CFCS Website if

(Continued on page 6)

**THE CENTRAL FLORIDA COMPUTER SOCIETY** is a charitable, scientific and educational, nonprofit organization, founded in 1976 and incorporated in 1982 to encourage interest in the operation and development of computers through meetings with free exchange of information and educational endeavors.

**Newsletter:** The CFCS Newsletter © 2008 is the official newsletter of the Central Florida Computer Society, Inc. It is published every month by CFCS for the purpose of keeping members and others informed of computer-related news and activities of the Society. Circulation: 25,000.

**THE CFCS Mailing Address:**  
 CFCS  
 PO Box 520084, Longwood, FL 32752

**Membership:** CFCS membership includes participation in the Society's activities and subscription to this Newsletter.

**Annual Dues Schedule:**

- Individual** .....\$ 25
- Extra family member** ..... 15
- Student (Full time)**..... 15
- Corporate membership**..... 100\*

\*Includes free business card ad

Members are responsible for sending a change-of-address notification (including e-mail) to:  
[membership@cfcs.org](mailto:membership@cfcs.org).

Gifts to CFCS are welcome, and because of the Society's nonprofit tax status, are tax deductible.

**Meetings:** CFCS meets each month on the 3rd Sunday at 2:00 p.m. at the location described on page 24.. Guests and the general public are invited to attend. Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within the Society meet regularly. See Special Interest Groups listings on pages 6 & 7.

**CFCS Web site:** [www.cfcs.org](http://www.cfcs.org)

**Editorial:** Articles for publication in the CFCS Newsletter should be emailed to the Editor at: [editor@cfcs.org](mailto:editor@cfcs.org). Please use Microsoft Word format, Times New Roman font, 12 point, if possible. The deadline for submitting articles is the first of each month.

Articles by authors other than directors of CFCS and the Newsletter staff do not necessarily reflect the policies or sanction of the Society. Unless otherwise indicated, articles in the CFCS Newsletter may be reprinted in newsletters of other nonprofit organizations, without permission, provided credit is given.

This issue was created using Microsoft Office 2003 and MS Publisher 2013 Edition. ☐

**Interested in making a difference?**  
**Then volunteer with CFCS!** The programs and benefits that members receive would not exist without members also volunteering. There are vacancies for a Program Chair/Coordinator, Education Chair and Advertising Chair. Please contact Jack Pearson, if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions. [president@cfcs.org](mailto:president@cfcs.org)

**Board of Directors**

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SIG Chair	Ken Larrabee	407-365-2660	<a href="mailto:sigs@cfcs.org">sigs@cfcs.org</a>

**Chairpersons and Coordinators**

Special Interest Groups	Ken Larrabee	407-365-2660	<a href="mailto:sigs@cfcs.org">sigs@cfcs.org</a>
APCUG	Hewie Poplock		<a href="mailto:apcug@cfcs.org">apcug@cfcs.org</a>
Education	(Open)	(e-mail only)	<a href="mailto:education@cfcs.org">education@cfcs.org</a>
FACUG	Arvin Meyer		<a href="mailto:facug@cfcs.org">facug@cfcs.org</a>
Hardware Manager	Arvin Meyer	407-327-3810	<a href="mailto:hardware@cfcs.org">hardware@cfcs.org</a>
Helpline Volunteers	Griff Moore	(e-mail only)	<a href="mailto:helpline@cfcs.org">helpline@cfcs.org</a>
Membership	Don VanDemark		<a href="mailto:membership@cfcs.org">membership@cfcs.org</a>
Photographer	Robert Black	407-421-4213	<a href="mailto:photographer@cfcs.org">photographer@cfcs.org</a>
Program Coordinator	Hewie Poplock	(e-mail only)	<a href="mailto:programs@cfcs.org">programs@cfcs.org</a>
Reviews (S/W & Books)	Mike Ungerman	(e-mail only)	<a href="mailto:reviews@cfcs.org">reviews@cfcs.org</a>
Webmaster	Cheryl Wilson	(e-mail only)	<a href="mailto:webmaster@cfcs.org">webmaster@cfcs.org</a>

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Associate Editor:

Proofreader: CFCS BoD

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 Full Page \$1200 Quarter Page \$450  
 Half Page 750 Business Card 150

**CFCS is associated with both  
 International & Florida User Group Associations:**




[www.apcug.net](http://www.apcug.net)

it is not in the BUSSLINE. It will be here when there are changes, so please do read carefully.

No new recycle info this month, so please go to [cfcs.org](http://cfcs.org) to read this column. Ed.

# HELP WANTED (again!)

We ran this column last month and received only nine responses\* to it, so we are giving you one more chance to answer. Please do so only if you did not do it last month, or would like to add to or change your responses. Also, Stan asked for comment on his column and got none, so we are reprinting his request at the end of this article to give you another chance at that also. He submitted no column this month, since no one supposedly read his last one:

The CFCS is considering changes to this newsletter, and we need your help. All we need is a quick email from you to [editor@cfcs.org](mailto:editor@cfcs.org). To answer the survey in the shortest way, all you need to type are five letters and five numbers.

In your email just use the letter/number combinations below to tell us whether you:

A1. always read the BUSSLINE, A2. sometimes read it.  
A3. never read it.

If you answered A1. or A2., do you read it:

B1. usually cover to cover, B2. skimming for salient articles, or B3. always read the same type. (If you answer B3, please state what they are, or were in this issue)

Would you like to see changes in future BUSSLINES, e.g. :

C1. fewer pages, C2. earlier distribution, C3. earlier announcement of meeting topics and speakers, C4. other (please clarify), C5. none

Do you think the BUSSLINE is:

D1. an important CFCS tradition, D2. superfluous in today's über information overloaded tech world, D3 no

opinion.

Do you think the BUSSLINE should be:

E1. discontinued, E2. kept as is, E3. modified by (explain).

Please feel free to make any other comments you think may help us assess the results of our survey. Thank you for your time.

Remember, only 5 letters and numbers are needed in your email.

## Stan Wallner's 'Musings' Request:

.....OK, that is it for this month. And, this is the 'last paragraph' I asked you to look at, for some feedback: Is anyone reading any of these? I hear nothing. Should I keep at it? If I continue to get no response at all, this may well be the last of these. Please do let me know!!

You are welcome!

\*One response included a nice letter, which we will comment on when we summarize the responses, and hopefully some regarding "Musings", in next month's BUSSLINE.

## Our Broadband Internet Access Is Not As Good As It Could Be by Ira Wilsker

*Ira Wilsker is a college professor, deputy sheriff, newspaper columnist, and former radio show host who now lives in Texas. You can reach him at: [iwilsker@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iwilsker@sbcglobal.net)*

### WEBSITES:

<http://www.broadband.gov>

<http://www.akamai.com/dl/akamai/akamai-soti-q114.pdf>

<http://consumerist.com/2014/07/03/american-broadband-speeds-improve-still-not-in-top-10-globally/>

<http://www.broadbandmap.gov>

Almost all of us are somewhat dependent on our internet access. While many businesses, schools, and other institutions can afford private, very high speed connections to the internet, most of us at home are subject to the limitations of our common carriers.

Here in southeast Texas, for home internet access, we have a few choices between wired and wireless broad-

band internet providers. Using the street address of The Examiner in downtown Beaumont as a point of comparison, but somewhat representative of the area, there are two wired broadband common carriers; Time Warner with its Roadrunner cable internet service, and AT&T (formerly known as Southwestern Bell) with its DSL service. According to a federal website, broadbandmap.gov, in downtown Beaumont, in the area of the Examiner, both providers are offering the same range of wired broadband speeds, ranging from 10 Mbps to 25 Mbps. If the wireless common carriers are also included, Verizon, AT&T Wireless, and T-Mobile are also offering internet service in the downtown area in the 10 - 25 Mbps range; Sprint Nextel and Leap Wireless International are offering wireless broadband in the range from 768 Kbps to 1.5 Mbps.

Downtown, with its density of population, businesses, and government agencies, there is an economy of scale for the common carriers that may justify the availability of faster than average broadband speeds. Using the same broadbandmap.gov website, I selected a location in the South Park area of Beaumont which is densely populated, in the vicinity of a university and a technical institute, but with a below average median income. Compared to downtown, Time Warner offered the same broadband speeds in South Park, but AT&T's DSL service was slower, at 6 - 10 Mbps. The wireless broadband access for this neighborhood was the same as for downtown.

795 Willow, Beaumont, Tx 77701

FIND

Search Results: Broadband Providers for this Area

Below is the list of broadband providers operating in all or part of the census block for the address above. If you entered a zip code or city name, the list below only displays the broadband providers offering service in the Census Block that is in the center of that zip code or city. See About and the FAQ to learn more about the data gathering process.

Help improve this data by confirming the availability and speed information. This dataset is updated approximately every six months and your input is important to us. Click **Expand All** to see details about each provider and to give us feedback.

Show All · Show Wired · Show Wireless Expand All

Advertised Speeds Above 3 Mbps Data as of: 06/30/13

Time Warner Cable Inc.	10 - 25 Mbps	»
AT&T Inc.	10 - 25 Mbps	»

Advertised Speeds Above 768 kbps and Below 3 Mbps Data as of: 06/30/13

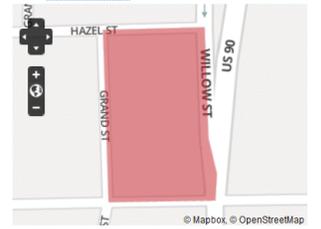
Most Common Speed: 10 Mbps Data Source · Download · API Call

Broadband services delivered via satellite are available to U.S. customers throughout all 50 States. Please click here for more information on individual Satellite Broadband service providers

Is your broadband provider listed? If not, please enter the provider below

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Rank my community

Summarize »

View statistics about my community

In the northwest area of Beaumont, in the area of Major Drive and Hwy 105, residential broadband availability is inferior to many other parts of the city. Again, according to broadbandmap.gov, (last updated June 30, 2013), Time Warner is the only wired common carrier to offer relatively high residential access, with its 10 - 25 Mbps speeds. AT&T's DSL service is available, but is only listed as being available with speeds of 768 Kbps to 1.5 Mbps; to be fair, I happen to have firsthand knowledge of DSL users in this neighborhood getting DSL speeds almost double those listed on broadbandmap.gov, but still much slower than the posted speeds for the cable internet service offered by Time Warner. It also needs to be noted that AT&T's DSL service is faster when closer

to an AT&T "switch" or fiber loop, and none are geographically close to this neighborhood. The wireless broadband speeds provided by the local cellular telephone providers are listed as the same speeds as available downtown, but again, by firsthand experience, some wireless cellular broadband in this neighborhood is very inferior in speed to those posted on the government website, as there are "dead spots" listed on the carrier coverage maps.

Just as an experiment, I tried the neighborhood of one of my daughters living in the Dallas suburb of Wylie. The wired broadband available at her house, according to broadbandmap.gov, far exceeds the speeds available here in Beaumont. In Wylie, the two primary wired residential common carriers are Time Warner and Verizon; the speed ranges

795 Willow, Beaumont, Tx 77701

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Show All · Show Wired · Show Wireless Expand All

Advertised Speeds Above 3 Mbps Data as of: 06/30/13

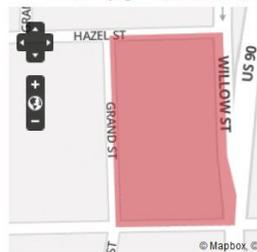
Verizon Communications Inc.	10 - 25 Mbps	»
AT&T Inc.	10 - 25 Mbps	»
T-Mobile	10 - 25 Mbps	»

Advertised Speeds Above 768 kbps and Below 3 Mbps Data as of: 06/30/13

Leap Wireless International, Inc.	768 kbps - 1.5 Mbps	»
Sprint Nextel Corporation	768 kbps - 1.5 Mbps	»

Most Common Speed: 10 Mbps Data Source · Download · API Call

Print this page · About area · Cor



Share »

Share this page with my community

Short URL »

Tweet

Like 0

Map »

Map my community

Rank »

Rank my community

State	Q1 '14 Avg. Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
1 Virginia	13.7	-4.3%	30%
2 Delaware	13.1	6.3%	18%
3 Massachusetts	13.1	2.6%	22%
4 Rhode Island	12.9	11%	35%
5 District Of Columbia	12.8	5.0%	18%
6 Washington	12.5	8.5%	29%
7 New Hampshire	12.3	4.0%	6.0%
8 Utah	12.1	6.0%	17%
9 Michigan	11.8	13%	42%
10 Connecticut	11.7	7.2%	18%

Figure 19: Average Connection Speed by State

State	Q1 '14 Peak Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
1 Virginia	53.8	-8.5%	24%
2 Rhode Island	53.2	1.2%	35%
3 Massachusetts	52.4	-13%	17%
4 Delaware	51.8	-1.8%	24%
5 District Of Columbia	51.6	-2.3%	15%
6 Washington	50.2	-13%	23%
7 New Jersey	49.2	-13%	26%
8 Maryland	48.1	-4.4%	68%
9 New York	47.9	-7.7%	13%
10 Michigan	47.1	-0.8%	31%

Figure 20: Average Peak Connection Speed by State

posted for both carriers are 50 to 100 Mbps, which is twice to 10 times the speed available here in much of southeast Texas. A lesser wired common carrier, Platinum Equity LLC is offering the Wylie neighborhood wired internet at 1.5 to 3 Mbps. Wireless broadband is also available in that neighborhood, with four of the eight wireless carriers listed offering service at 10 to 25 Mbps (Verizon, T-Mobile, AT&T, and JAB Wireless), and the other four offering lesser speeds.

While there are other national internet service providers, such as the handful of satellite internet providers that offer broadband over almost the entire country, there are some major differences in internet speeds available in different states. According to the recently published "Akamai's State of the Internet" (akamai.com/dl/akamai/akamai-soti-q114.pdf), the northeastern and middle Atlantic states generally offer the fastest internet connection speeds, with Virginia leading both the average internet connection speed at 13.7 Mbps, and the highest peak connection speeds of 53.8 Mbps. Texas, by com-

parison, according to broadbandmap.gov, is ranked at 13th or 14th among the states, depending on metric used. Rhode Island has the largest percentage of users with internet connections faster than 10 Mbps, at 55%, with Massachusetts leading the states in the rate of internet connections faster than 15 Mbps at 27%; Texas is not listed on any of the several "top ten" speed lists.

While many of us Americans are ethnocentric, believing that we are the biggest and best in everything technical, we would be shocked to find out how low we, as a country, rank in average available internet speeds. Globally, the average internet user connects to the internet at an average speed of 3.9 Mbps, but South Korea has the fastest average internet connection speed of 23.6 Mbps, followed by Japan at 14.6 Mbps, Hong Kong at 13.3 Mbps, Switzerland at 12.7 Mbps, Netherlands at 12.4 Mbps, and Latvia at 12.0 Mbps. The top 10 fastest average connection speeds by nation are rounded out with Sweden, Czech republic, Finland, and Ireland. The

State	% Above 10 Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
1 Rhode Island	55%	5.1%	61%
2 Massachusetts	54%	1.4%	29%
3 New Hampshire	52%	5.2%	12%
4 Delaware	48%	1.4%	30%
5 New Jersey	48%	-3.0%	39%
6 Connecticut	47%	8.0%	42%
7 Michigan	45%	12%	101%
8 Washington	45%	9.8%	38%
9 Virginia	44%	-1.5%	49%
10 Pennsylvania	44%	4.6%	39%

Figure 21: High Broadband (>10 Mbps) Connectivity, U.S. States

Country/Region	Q1'14 Avg. Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
- Global	3.9	1.8%	24%
1 South Korea	23.6	8.0%	145%
2 Japan	14.6	12%	29%
3 Hong Kong	13.3	8.5%	24%
4 Switzerland	12.7	5.8%	26%
5 Netherlands	12.4	0.3%	28%
6 Latvia	12.0	15%	26%
7 Sweden	11.6	6.6%	30%
8 Czech Republic	11.2	-1.9%	24%
9 Finland	10.7	18%	37%
10 Ireland	10.7	4.3%	47%

Figure 14: Average Connection Speed by Country/Region

Global Rank	Country/Region	Q1 '14 Avg. Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
12	United States	10.5	9.0%	31%
16	Canada	9.7	8.7%	29%
57	Uruguay	4.3	37%	151%
65	Mexico	4.0	-0.3%	24%
71	Ecuador	3.3	-2.9%	47%
72	Chile	3.3	-2.3%	17%
77	Argentina	3.2	3.7%	65%
81	Colombia	3.0	2.0%	14%
85	Peru	2.7	2.5%	46%
87	Brazil	2.6	-3.1%	23%
88	Panama	2.6	-5.5%	0.7%
109	Costa Rica	2.0	-2.8%	0.8%
125	Venezuela	1.3	-15%	20%
128	Paraguay	1.2	-14%	8.5%
134	Bolivia	0.9	-9.1%	15%

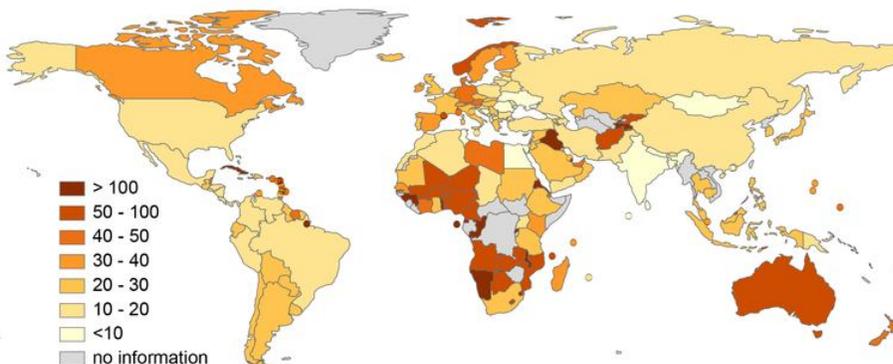
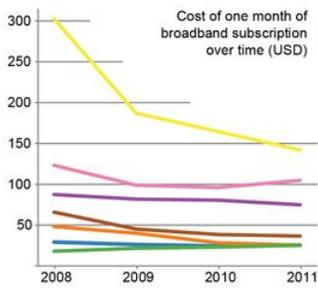
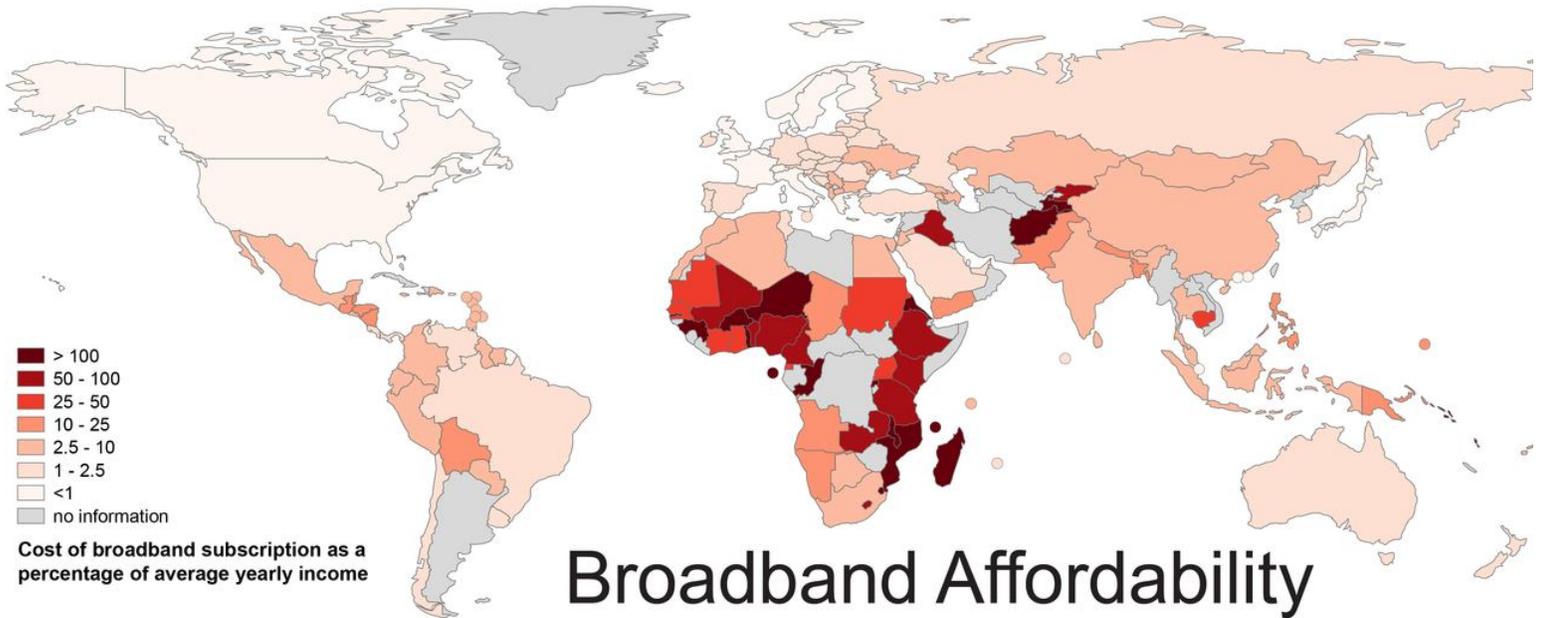
Figure 24: Average Connection Speed by Americas Country

United States ranked 12th with average connection speeds of 10.5 Mbps, and 17th in average peak connection speeds at 40.6 Mbps. According to Akami, the United States ranks 7th globally in internet connectivity

Global Rank	Country/Region	Q1 '14 Peak Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
9	Uruguay	45.4	24%	206%
17	United States	40.6	-4.6%	19%
19	Canada	39.7	-1.9%	19%
69	Chile	20.9	3.0%	6.7%
75	Mexico	19.3	-9.1%	11%
76	Ecuador	19.0	-15%	3.2%
79	Argentina	18.8	-4.5%	27%
82	Brazil	17.9	-12%	0.2%
86	Peru	17.1	-6.3%	11%
87	Colombia	16.8	0.2%	9.2%
107	Panama	12.5	-15%	-5.6%
122	Costa Rica	10.1	-23%	-21%
128	Paraguay	9.0	-14%	-4.7%
130	Bolivia	8.4	-22%	3.7%
134	Venezuela	7.9	-24%	-6.8%

Figure 25: Average Peak Connection Speed by Americas Country

faster than 10Mbps (36% of users), but this is the highest ranking in the Western Hemisphere, with Canada next at 14th (32% of users). The fastest average speeds are available in parts of Asia and Europe, with much of the



Oxford Internet Institute  
University of Oxford

by Mark Graham (@geoplace) and Stefano De Sabbata (@maps4thought) Internet Geographies at the Oxford Internet Institute 2014 geography.oii.ox.ac.uk

data sources: ITU • itu.int World Bank • data.worldbank.org

Southern Hemisphere, predominantly Africa and South America, being at the bottom in almost all internet metrics including accessibility, speed, and utilization; these low ratings generally correlate with high levels of poverty.

When we realize that many of us are now using the internet for entertainment, such as streaming HD movies and HD TV to our big screens, this lack of speed (bandwidth) may hamper our ability to utilize all of the available technology. Common online tasks, such as chatting, instant messaging, and email require relatively little in terms of connection speed, but streaming video, especially HD, can consume enormous amounts of bandwidth, an opportunity that many of us are unable to utilize, as we are simply lacking the internet bandwidth to capitalize on the technology. If we consider commerce, faster internet speeds will obviously load pages faster, and process orders and payments much more quickly. Services such as YouTube could be viewed without the apparent delays that many of us routinely encounter as the video "buffers" or otherwise inexplicably pauses while being viewed. Online gaming quality improves significantly with greater connection speeds, as gaming delays due to inadequate bandwidth can cost players points or the game itself, as an opponent may have a superior connection, rather than better luck or skill.

While there may be alleged economic justifications and considerations, residents of our area, state, and nation may be technologically hindered and unable to compete in a global environment due to our inability to access affordable, very high speed internet service. I have performed several readily available internet speed checks on my home internet, and my daughter's Dallas area home internet, and her speed consistently is about 25 times faster than my home broadband internet; her much faster internet service is not much more expensive than my painfully slow (in comparison) connection, even though I have the "premium" service offered by my carrier. Her Dallas area neighborhood is fully "wired" with glass fiber, while my local neighborhood, including several newly built subdivisions, are still wired with obsolescent copper wire and slightly more modern coaxial cable.

We live in a rapidly changing technological environment; it would be great if we as a city and as a country could make use of the latest internet technology. Whether it is education or business, we all need modern, fast internet access; without it, we will find it difficult to compete with those who do have access to such technology.



## 3 Better Ways to Store Your Files than On the Desktop

By Joel Lee, MakeUseOfCom.com,  
May 5, 2014

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/3-better-ways-store-files-desktop/>

<http://bit.ly/1iiLU2u>

Did you know that storing files directly on your desktop can harm your productivity? I used to be one of "those" people who downloaded files straight to the desktop. If you can identify with that, then I have good news for you: you can do better. Desktop storage is simple, sure, but it comes with hidden drawbacks you may not know about.

Kick the bad habit with these alternative file storage methods. They may not be as convenient but I promise that you'll learn to love them in the long run.

The urge to save files to the desktop is understandable. It provides immediate access with a single click, which means that it's tempting to turn the desktop into a de facto headquarters for storage. But unless you are strict with maintenance, you'll eventually succumb to these issues:

**No file protection.** As noted by PC World, certain directories are not affected by System Restore, the most recognizable location being My Documents. Files on the desktop are affected by System Restore, which can result in unexpected file disappearances.

**No file backups.** Many file backup programs ignore desktop files by default. Most programs worth their salt will allow you to change the settings and include the desktop if necessary, but all it takes is one forgetful moment to accidentally lose an important desktop file.

**Clutter, clutter, clutter.** The story is always the same. You begin your desktop collection with a few documents. Over time, the collection grows to include images, music, programs, zip files, and more documents. Suddenly, finding the right

document takes more time than actually opening it.

really used them, right? Well, you should reconsider.

### Separate Drive Partitions

One bit of computer wisdom that you should learn is this: “Never save data on the same partition as your operating system.” In Windows, the location of the desktop on the file system does reside on the same partition as the operating system itself.

Why is this important advice? Because you want to avoid putting all of your eggs in the same basket.



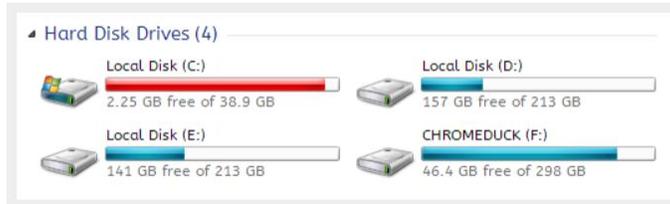
In truth, these four libraries are special. They aren't just directories; they're collections of multiple directories. In each library, you can specify different directories to be included and that library will show the content from all included directories. It sounds more complicated than it is.

Think of it like this: You can save your videos to many different locations and link those directories to the Videos library. Then, whenever you access the Videos library, you'll see all

of those files in one place.

Let's say that you happen to contract a mild virus or malware that attacks your operating system. It might wipe all files related to the operating system itself OR it may affect the entire partition that holds the operating system. By losing the operating system, you lose all of your saved data as well.

It's just as convenient as storing everything on the desktop, yet infinitely more flexible and organized. For more details on how to take advantage of this feature, check out Chris's writeup on how to use Windows Libraries. <http://bit.ly/1iMkORF>



But if you installed Windows to the C: partition and stored all of your files on the D: partition, your files on D: would be safe even if C: were wiped clean. The only way D: would be affected is if the physical hard drive itself was wiped or damaged.

### Store Files in the Cloud

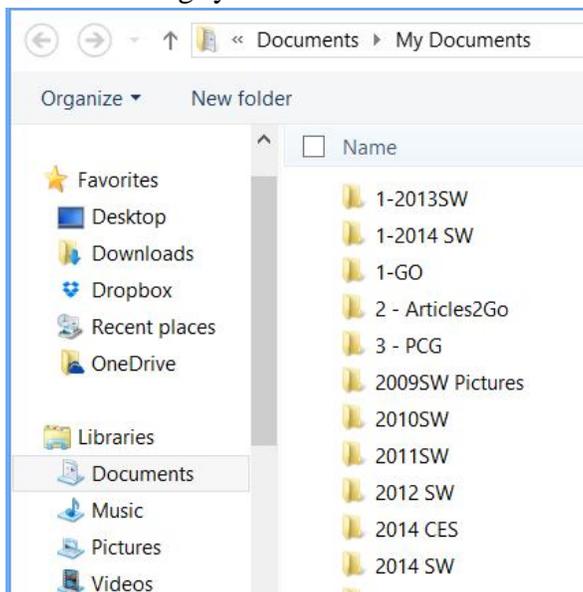
Cloud storage has been a big buzz term over the past few years and for good reason. While cloud-related solutions like Dropbox, G+ Drive, or Microsoft OneDrive come with

One additional benefit of having separate partitions is that you can reinstall Windows without losing your saved data. Tina has written on the subject of resizing Windows partitions, so check it out if you want to take advantage of this feature. <http://bit.ly/1lfBCDe>

privacy concerns <<http://bit.ly/1lzsQ4F>>, they also offer many benefits and I think people are too quick to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

### Use Windows Libraries

Every installation of Windows comes with a directory called My Documents. In Windows 7, it was renamed to Documents and came with a couple of buddies: Music, Pictures, and Videos. They're called libraries and you've probably seen them before, but never



Here's how it works: You set aside one or more directories that automatically sync with whatever service you're using (comparison of cloud storage services). These files can be accessed from anywhere and they can be set to private or public.

Why is this better than storing straight on the desktop?

**Immediate backups.** Due to automatic synchronization, you rarely need to worry about lost files. If your computer gets wiped somehow, those files still reside on the cloud and you can always retrieve them again.

**Revision history.** Not every cloud service offers a revision history, but most do and it's an important feature. Basically, the service will track every change that's made to the file (it may be limited to the last X changes) and allow you to instantly revert to a past version if necessary.

One Drive (aka SkyDrive) comes integrated with Windows 8 and can help you keep your files synced.

### Need Quick Access to Files?

Sometimes convenience wins out over practicality and reason. The desktop is great because it allows for immediate access, right? With one small compromise, you can maintain that convenience. The answer is to use shortcuts.

Creating a shortcut is as simple as dragging a file using the right mouse button to where you want the shortcut to appear, then selecting Create shortcut here from the menu. Even if a shortcut gets wiped, the actual file will still be safe.

But instead of putting the shortcuts on the desktop, why not take it one step further?

Right click on any file shortcut and select either *Pin to taskbar* or *Pin to start menu*. It's a self-explanatory feature that works just as well as, if not better than, traditional desktop shortcuts. I use it day in and day out and I wouldn't have it any other way.

### Conclusion

Ultimately, personal preference will always win. For those of you who have been "desktopping" for years, you'll probably find it near impossible to break the habit. I still do it from time to time, though I try my best to clean up after myself when I realize what I'm doing. It just doesn't make sense to store everything on the desktop anymore.

Do you clutter up your desktop with files and folders galore? If so, are you convinced enough to try a safer method of file storage? Share your thoughts with us in the comments! <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/3-better-ways-store-files-desktop/>

## Be Careful of Buying Old Versions

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

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Don't be fooled by a cheap price on a product. It may be last year's model. While sometimes this is okay, for others it is a real rip-off. Here are some examples that you may want to read. Remember being a savvy consumer is essential in today's high tech world.

In the recent past, when a new version of a product was introduced, the old versions were removed from the retailer's shelves. So when you went into the store, you were sure of getting the latest and greatest version of each product.

But times have changed. Now the manufacturers are keeping their old versions available right alongside the newest models. In some cases, the product names have changed enough that the average person can easily tell the new from the old. For example, the iPad Air is Apple's newest full-sized iPad. You will see that Apple is also still selling the older iPad 2 model. In this case, the name actually changed and the marketing will usually indicate which is new and which is old.

In many cases, however, the name of the product doesn't change. There are often several versions of the same product with the same name or similar names selling at different prices.

Take the iPad mini, for example. Apple recently introduced a new, improved version of that product. The cheapest current version is selling for \$399. So when Walmart advertised the iPad mini for \$299 and it offered a \$100 gift card with that purchase, it seemed like a fantastic deal. However, Walmart was selling last year's model in that ad. They didn't have to stipulate anything other than "iPad mini" because both last year's model and the latest version are both simply called "iPad mini". The same is true for devices from other manufacturers,



as well. The Microsoft Surface tablet has an original version and a newer updated version. If you purchase a Nexus tablet, you will find a version from last year right alongside the newest 2013 version that was just released.

The newer versions almost always have improved functionality and new features, but buying last year's model is not necessarily bad. To be a smart consumer, however, you need to know exactly what you are buying. It is always wise to ask if you are purchasing the latest version. Even better, take the time to research the older version and compare it spec-by-spec with the newest version. That is the only way to know if the price difference is worthwhile for you.

Luckily, the Internet make such research easy. Right on the Apple website you can find a comparison for the two versions of the iPad mini. The newer iPad mini has a much improved screen resolution and a faster processor but the main specifications of the device remain the same. If you don't care that much about the screen clarity or the speed, the savings may be worthwhile.

You may not always need to purchase the latest and greatest version of each product. Only you can determine exactly what you need and which features you will use, and which you can do without. Doing research on the products can be time-consuming, but it is a worthwhile endeavor that will help you find the perfect device at the right price.



When it comes to high tech gadgets, being a savvy consumer is essential. You need to be "in the know" so you can make an informed decision on whether you would rather have the best device currently on the market or a little extra money in your pocket.

Looks like we have another interesting topic for our July 13th Meeting. My thanks to Hewie for setting up this program.

Everything is going great with CFCS.

This is also a reminder that your dues may be due, if you haven't paid them yet.

Thanks for all your help, Jack Pearson

## PC Browser Wars Intensify - Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Chrome by Ira Wilsker

*Ira Wilsker is a college professor, deputy sheriff, newspaper columnist, and former radio show host who now lives in Texas. You can reach him at: [iwilsker@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iwilsker@sbcglobal.net)*

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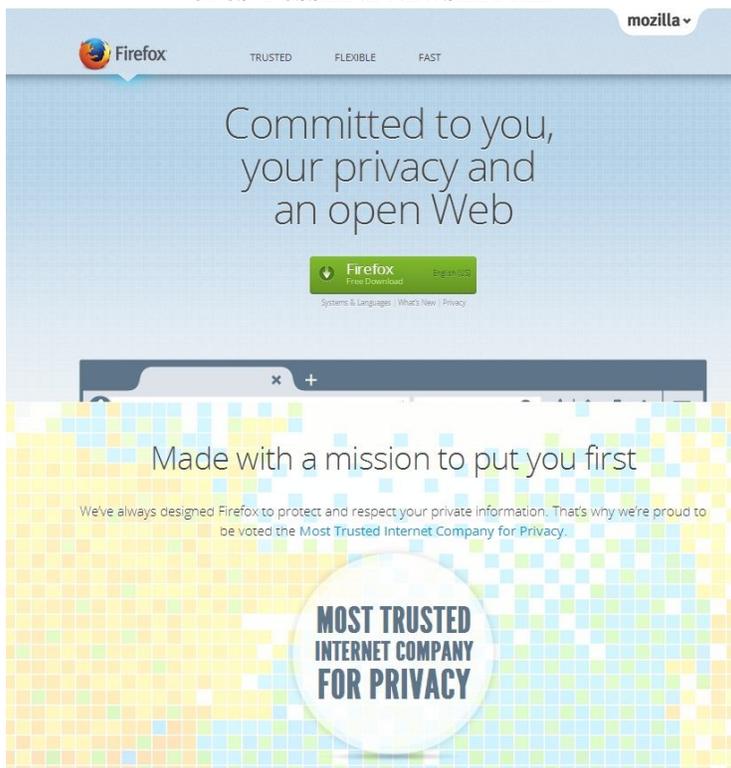
With Microsoft Windows still the top selling and most widely used desktop and laptop operating system, it is inevitable that the integral Microsoft Internet Explorer initially becomes the predominant web browser. Often known by users as "IE" or "The Big Blue E", Internet Explorer is built into Windows, functions as an integral

component of the operating system, and is very difficult to remove or uninstall. Since Internet Explorer comes with all domestic version of Windows, and many users happily browse with it, many of those users see no apparent benefits of installing and using one of the major browser competitors, such as Google's Chrome browser or Mozilla's Firefox. There are dozens of other lesser known, but generally very good browsers for the PC such as Opera, Safari, Maxthon, Sleipnir 5, and others. According to the website Net Market Share, as of May, 2014, Internet Explorer still has 58.17% of the desktop

market share, followed by Chrome with 17.73%, Firefox 16.81%, Safari 5.72%, Opera 1.16%, with the remaining 0.42% using lesser known or undetectable browsers.

I am frequently asked the question, "I have been using the Internet Explorer that came with my computer. It seems to work fine, so why change?" For the many millions using Windows XP, the answer is simple - Microsoft has not released any major evolutionary new versions of Internet Explorer for XP in quite a while, and will not be releasing any compatible new versions of IE in the future. The older versions of Internet Explorer, especially IE 6, which is still widely used on may XP powered desktops and laptops, has multitudes of known vulnerabilities, which can make the computer susceptible to a plethora of security risks including hacker attacks, malware inserted by purloined websites, identity theft, and other endemic online perils. For those Windows XP users still unaware, it might come as a shock that as of

April 8 this year, Microsoft officially stopped releasing material updates and support for XP; no more Internet Explorer updates will be available to XP users, even though browser based security threats continue to evolve and spread.



Users of newer versions of Windows, including Vista, Windows 7, and Windows 8 have been able to download and install newer versions of Internet Explorer, each new version of IE being more secure and feature rich than the earlier version it replaces, but the absolute newest versions of Internet Explorer are primarily released for Windows 8 users. It is a well known and documented fact that many of the users of the newer versions of Windows have not installed all of the Windows updates pushed by Microsoft; several of these skipped updates included security patches and enhance-

ments for Internet Explorer, leaving those users vulnerable to web based threats, as well as foregoing any browser performance enhancements that may have been released by Microsoft.

For users of Windows XP the only current alternatives to the obsolescent Internet Explorer that is installed on their machines are any one of the major alternative browsers, all of which are free, and offer superior security and performance enhancements over the Internet Explorer that they are currently using. The most heavily promoted and widely used of the alternative browsers that will run on Windows XP, as well as on all of the newer versions of Windows are Mozilla's Firefox and Google's Chrome, along with small but loyal followings of the Opera browser, and the PC version of Apple's Safari browser.

Considering the dynamic and rapidly changing content and technology of the internet, new web based features and functions are becoming more widely used on count-

less websites, which often require an updated browser in order for the user to take advantage of these new features. Sadly, the technology available to hackers, crackers, cyber thieves, and other miscreants has also evolved rapidly, with new inter-

## Faster at what you do most

Firefox was named the "speed king" in independent benchmark and performance tests against other browsers. Save time and do just about anything quicker than before.



\*Based on Tom's Hardware Web Browser Grand Prix XVI results.

net based cyber threats constantly appearing and trying to take over our computers using devious new means. One significant advantage that Firefox and Chrome have available to the user, but not as readily available to Internet Explorer users, is the very frequent release and automated (optional) updating of the installed third party browsers. In recent months, both Chrome and Firefox have released significant new versions of their respective browsers on average about every six or seven weeks, along with frequent patches and updates every few days. While some consider these frequent updates and patches of Firefox and Chrome as a minor annoyance, they do generally provide the user with enhanced functionality and speed, better protection from newly discovered web based security threats, and other functional benefits. Unless a Windows XP user downloads and installs one of these updated third party browsers, and uses it to the complete exclusion of Internet Explorer, the XP users continuing to use the older version of Internet Explorer are becoming more vulnerable to web based attacks, a fact not lost on cyber crooks.

The latest versions of Firefox and Chrome are much improved over earlier versions in terms of features, speed, security and privacy. Both are available to anyone for free, can run on almost any versions of Windows from XP (SP2) or later, and can be installed in addition to any other browsers already in-

**Quick Selection Guide**

**Google Chrome**  
5 Star Rating: ★★★★★

 Gizmo's Freeware award as the best product in its class!

- Runs as a stand-alone program on a user's computer
- Supports multiple operating systems, frequent & silent updates, built-in flash and pdf viewer, large selection of extensions, cloud printing,
- Getting slower, newer version has some backward software compatibility, still runs 32 bit.
- <http://www.google.com/chrome>
- <http://www.google.com/chrome/eula.html>
- 31.0.1650.57  Online Installer: 576 KB (Offline Installer: 33.37 MB, download link below)  32 bit but 64 bit compatible
- Open source freeware
- A portable version of this product is available but not from the developer.
- Windows, Linux, Mac OS X

**Mozilla Firefox**  
5 Star Rating: ★★★★★

- Runs as a stand-alone program on a user's computer
- Simplified interface, competitively fast, broad cross platform support, very secure, sync & panoramas, thousands of add-ons, excellent website compatibility, large developer community
- Doesn't play well with Adobe Flash Player.
- <http://www.mozilla.org/>
- <https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/fox/?icn=tabz#desktop>
- 27.01  23 MB  32 bit but 64 bit compatible
- Open source freeware
- A portable version of this product is available from the developer.
- Windows, Mac, Linux

**Internet Explorer**  
5 Star Rating: ★★★★★

stalled. Installing a browser on a computer which already has Internet Explorer (or any other competitive browser) is non-destructive, and competing browsers can coexist on a computer without interference. One nice feature when installing any of the newer browsers is that they can import favorites (bookmarks), cookies, passwords, and other information from the other installed browsers, without hurting the older browser or its information. Opening the new browser after the install process makes all of the favorites (bookmarks) and other information from the older browser immediately available. Many users of older versions of Internet Explorer notice an instant improvement in speed and compatibility using the newer browsers, when compared to the older IE. What users of the newer alternative browsers do not immediately notice are the enhanced security and privacy features incorporated in the newer browsers.

Firefox and Chrome are in a virtual war for supremacy in the alternative browser market, each claiming that its new versions are better, faster, or safer than their competitors' products. While there are several published speed and security comparisons of Chrome and Firefox, a careful reading of the statistics, as well as anecdotal information, indicate that they are both fast, secure, and overall excellent browsers, far exceeding in all aspects the older versions of Internet Explorer, and very competitive with, if not

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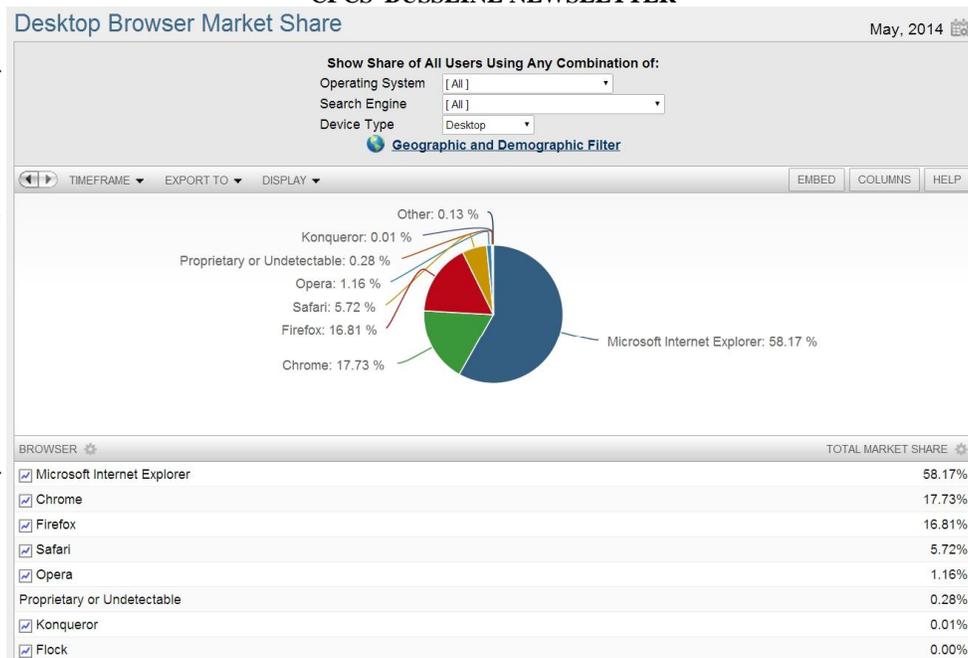
 Add  Save  Share

		
<b>Mozilla Firefox Web Browser</b> By Mozilla Foundation	<b>Chrome Web Browser</b> By Google	<b>Internet Explorer Web Browser</b> By Microsoft
Compare	vs	vs
User Rating: 4.2  75 ratings <a href="#">Add a review</a> <a href="#">See all reviews</a>	User Rating: 4.0  96 ratings <a href="#">Add a review</a> <a href="#">See all reviews</a>	User Rating: 2.6  57 ratings <a href="#">Add a review</a> <a href="#">See all reviews</a>

surpassing, the newer versions of IE.

Firefox, available for free download from [mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/desktop](http://mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/desktop) had been my personal favorite for several years being used almost exclusively, but recent versions of Chrome have started to become attractive to me, as Chrome handles some of the websites that I frequently use (such as my webmail) better than Firefox, but Firefox is still my browser of choice on most other websites. To be honest, I am equally comfortable using either of them, and still only rarely use my updated Internet Explorer. Chrome is available for free download from [google.com/chrome/browser](http://google.com/chrome/browser).

In terms of the actual published performance statistics, the latest versions of all of the big three browsers claim to be the fastest, safest, and most feature rich of the pack, but other than the websites of the browser publishers themselves, the independent comparisons of the latest browser versions when taken as a whole show no clear overall winner, other than in almost all of the comparisons, both Firefox or Chrome (or both) outperform the latest Internet Explorer from Microsoft. One problem in comparing relative performance is the machine and software on which the browsers are being tested. With billions of PCs in use, each of which is somewhat unique as they have different processors, memory, video capabilities, installed software, and countless other variables, users on different machines can honestly report different levels of performance with the same browsers. Here are my recommendations: If you are still running Windows XP, even with good security software, use your Internet Explorer for only two more tasks; once to download the latest version of Firefox, and the other to download the latest version of Chrome (links given above). After both of these browsers are successfully downloaded, install them, and then retire Internet Explorer, never to be used again. It does not matter which of the two new browsers are installed first, as both will in turn import all necessary information, bookmarks/favorites, and other content from the obsolete Internet Explorer on the XP machine. Try Firefox for a while,



and then try Chrome for a while, and make your own decision based on your own experience and personal preferences. Do not be shocked if the differences and improvements between the newer browsers and the obsolete version of the Internet Explorer installed on your XP machine are startling, in a positive way. These new

browsers may have a short learning curve, but after a little while, their superiority over the old IE will become clear to the user.

If you are running the newer Windows operating systems of Vista, Windows 7, or Windows 8, even if your Internet Explorer had recently been updated, download both Chrome and Firefox, install them, and give them a try, alongside your Internet Explorer. As have millions of your predecessors, you may also find that these alternative browsers may be superior to your Internet Explorer. If you absolute despise one or both of your newly installed alternative browsers, the Windows Add/Remove Programs function works fine in removing these browsers from your computer.

Being free downloads, and only taking minutes to install, there is no significant risk in trying an alternative browser; but you may find that one or both are superior to the Internet Explorer that came with your computer.

## Bitcoin — a New Currency?

By Phil Sorrentino, Staff Writer,  
 The Computer Club, Inc.,  
 Sun City Center, FL  
 April 2014 issue, The Journal  
[www.scccomputerclub.org/](http://www.scccomputerclub.org/)  
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Bitcoin is basically a payment system. It provides the ability to transfer some type of value from a payer to a payee. (There are no physical coins, only entries in a software ledger.) If you have been monitoring the news with your tablet or laptop, or you have been reading the

daily papers, you probably already know a lot about Bitcoin. (Mostly negatives lately, I suspect.) But the interest here is mostly on the technology. Bitcoin uses fairly complex peer-to-peer software technology and operates with no central authority (or banks). (It reminds me of the operation of the Bit Torrent file sharing networks, only “value” files are being transferred instead of “entertainment” files.) I must say, up front, that I am not a proponent of this type of software currency. With the current levels of computer security, I feel that there is too much opportunity for problems, like hacking, spoofing and down-right dishonesty. However, progress will probably move this technology forward. I must also admit that I missed some major changes like MySpace, and Twitter, so my opinion of Bitcoin should probably be taken with a grain of salt. The idea of a digital currency, convenient and untraceable, and far from the oversight of governments and banks, has been an interesting software technology topic since the beginning of the Internet.

Bitcoin is a network of computers running Bitcoin software. The Bitcoin network manages the transactions and the issuing of bitcoins. All this is carried out collectively by the network participants. Bitcoin is open-source. Nobody owns or controls Bitcoin, yet anyone with the proper software can take part in its operation. Proponents say that “through many of its unique properties, Bitcoin can enable uses that could not be accomplished by any previous payment system,” but I’m not sure what that really means. Bitcoin is not the only peer-to-peer based digital currency, but it is certainly the most notable. Peercoin and Primecoin are also mentioned in the literature, and in fact a research team at Johns Hopkins computer lab is developing a similar digital currency called Zerocoin. Maybe this type of currency will really be in our future.

Bitcoin, as a new currency, was created in 2009 by an unknown person using the name Satoshi Nakamoto. Satoshi Nakamoto, it is said, is almost certainly a pseudonym for the actual individual, or individuals. Transactions are made with no middle men, meaning no banks. There are no transaction fees and no need to give your real name. Some internet merchants have begun to accept Bitcoins. Supposedly, you can use bitcoins to buy things on the internet like web hosting services. There are even indications that you can buy everyday items like pizza using bitcoins. Because bitcoins are used to transfer wealth, people can send bitcoins to each other using their computers, or mobile phone, or tablet apps. It is supposed to be similar to sending cash digitally. Bitco-

ins can be used to buy merchandise anonymously, a characteristic that has certainly caught the interest of the government. In addition, international payments are easy and cheap because bitcoins are not tied to any country, country’s currency, or subject to any regulation. (But the lack of regulation may actually encourage volatility and add risk to the value of a Bitcoin in the future, so this may not be as good as it sounds.) Small businesses may like bitcoins because there are no, or very low, fees. Some people have even been buying bitcoins to have as an investment, hoping their value will appreciate. But bitcoins have been extremely volatile, not really like an investment, but more like a speculation similar to a roulette bet at a casino.

Bitcoin employs the use of very complex peer-to-peer software technology, along with software cryptography. Bitcoin is called a cryptocurrency, because it uses cryptography to control the creation and the transfer of bitcoins among the users. Bitcoin uses public-key cryptography in which pairs of cryptographic keys, one public and one private, are generated. (A cryptographic key is a piece of information that specifies a particular transformation of plaintext into ciphertext, and vice-versa.) A collection of keys is called a “wallet”. A Bitcoin transaction transfers bitcoin ownership to a new individual. A coded alphanumeric string is created from the use of the individual’s public key. The corresponding private key is then used to decode the transaction. Only the correct private key will complete the transaction. Additionally a digital signature is checked for validity. (A digital signature is a mathematical scheme for demonstrating the authenticity of a digital message or document.) Private key protection is critical for Bitcoin security, because anyone

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with the correct private key can spend all of the bitcoins sent to that individual. Security is of paramount importance for the success of Bitcoin. Theft of bitcoins has occurred on numerous occasions and the practical day-to-day security of bitcoins remains an on-going concern.

Bitcoins are stored in a “digital wallet,” which exists either in the cloud or on a user’s computer. The wallet is a kind of virtual bank account that allows users to send or receive bitcoins, pay for goods, or save their money. Bitcoin wallet software has been implemented in several programming languages for personal computers, mobile devices, and as web applications. At the most basic, a wallet program generates and stores private keys and communicates with peers on the Bitcoin network. Unlike bank accounts, bitcoin wallets are not insured by the FDIC. Although each bitcoin transaction is recorded in a public log, the names of buyers and sellers are never revealed, only their wallet IDs are recorded. This lets users buy or sell items without anyone having the ability to trace the transaction back to them. This is why it has become the currency of choice for online illicit activities.

Bitcoins can be obtained in exchange for products, services, or other currencies, or by a process called “mining.” Bitcoins are actually created by the mining process. People compete to “mine” bitcoins using computers to solve complex math problems. In other words, Bitcoin’s mining operation consists of the network of its users’ computers solving complex mathematical problems. I’m not sure how this really works, but as a result of the effort to solve the problems, at preset intervals, an algorithm releases new bitcoins into the network. The interval is said to be 25 bitcoins every 10 minutes, with the pace of bitcoin generation halving in increments until around the year 2140. This automated pace is meant to ensure regular growth of the monetary supply without interference by third parties, like a central bank, (of which it is thought might lead to hyperinflation).

Bitcoins can be bought and traded on an “Exchange” website, however the most prominent exchange site “Mt. Gox,” has just recently “gone dark,” and is not to be found online. Another exchange, “SecondMarket,” was about to go online, but the apparent collapse of Mt. Gox may delay, or even eliminate the possibility of any new exchanges.

Because the bitcoin transactions are anonymous, there can be a dark side to this technology. Bitcoin has been the subject of government investigation due to its ties with illicit activities. In 2013 the FBI shut down the

website, Silk Road, which came on line in 2011, as the first, or one of the first, websites to use Bitcoin for anonymous purchase of all sorts of illegal products and services. The acceptance of only the digital currency, Bitcoin was meant to add an additional layer of anonymity to buyers and sellers. As of September, 2012, the Silk Road site had over 10,000 listings for drugs including heroin, cocaine and LSD. Silk Road was shut down by law enforcement officials last year. This February Federal officials announced a grand jury indictment of the man accused of creating the online drug marketplace. He is in law enforcement custody, and could be behind bars for the rest of his life. He is charged with engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, computer hacking, money laundering, and operating a narcotics conspiracy. (Sounds a lot like hacking, spoofing and down-right dishonesty, to me.)

Bitcoin as a form of payment for products and services has seen growth, because merchants have an incentive to accept the currency because transaction costs are lower than the 2 to 3% typically charged by credit card companies. Commercial use of Bitcoin, illicit or otherwise, is currently small compared to its use by speculators, which has been the cause of bitcoin’s price volatility. No one knows what will become of bitcoin. It is mostly unregulated, but that could change. Governments are concerned about taxation and their lack of control over the currency. Maybe the government will take a more active role in the development of a digital currency, but I think the government is happy with its own dollar based currency. It’s not clear if Bitcoin will be in our future, but it does look like we will have some form of digital payment technology when we get there.

## **A Good Password Manager May Enhance Your Computing Security**

by Ira Wilsker

Ira Wilsker is a college professor, deputy sheriff, newspaper columnist, and former radio show host who now lives in Texas. You can reach him at: [iwilsker@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iwilsker@sbcglobal.net)

### **WEBSITES:**

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/best-free-web-form-filler-password-manager.htm>  
<http://www.infoworld.com/d/security/review-the-best-password-managers-pcs-macs-and-mobile-devices-244519>  
<https://lastpass.com>  
<http://keepass.com>  
<https://www.passwordbox.com>  
<http://www.roboform.com>  
<http://splashdata.com/press/worstpasswords2013.htm>

Presenting SplashData's "Worst Passwords of 2013":

Rank	Password	Change from 2012
1	123456	Up 1
2	password	Down 1
3	12345678	Unchanged
4	qwerty	Up 1
5	abc123	Down 1
6	123456789	New
7	111111	Up 2
8	1234567	Up 5
9	iloveyou	Up 2
10	adobe123	New
11	123123	Up 5
12	admin	New
13	1234567890	New
14	letmein	Down 7
15	photoshop	New
16	1234	New
17	monkey	Down 11
18	shadow	Unchanged
19	sunshine	Down 5
20	12345	New
21	password1	Up 4
22	princess	New
23	azerty	New
24	trustno1	Down 12
25	000000	New

With the spread of password stealing malware, password stealing interceptors on jeopardized websites, key logging trojans, and hackers using brute force to determine our online passwords, we all need to practice good password security. Over the years, I have been promoting password security in this column, yet I still find that many local people are still using simple passwords that are easy to guess. What may be even worse is that many of those same people who use simple passwords also use the same simple passwords on multiple websites, or use the same simple password on all websites!

This violation of common sense has resulted in countless victims who have had bank accounts emptied, credit cards abused, spam emails apparently sent from our email accounts, problems with eBay and other online sellers, and a variety of other distressing events all because the one password used for all has been compromised. When the user of a single password for everything has that sole password compromised, then all of their online transactions become vulnerable, often resulting in a massive and expensive case of complex identity theft.

I have been preaching in this column for many years that we all need to utilize a complex and unique password for each website or other online account that we utilize; in this way if one password is compromised (a more likely occurrence now than in the past), that compromise will only impact that single web service, and not all of the other websites that we visit. For those skeptics reading

this column, multiple evaluations of the passwords stolen in many of the major online data thefts and later published on hacker websites, still indicate that much of the public still have not learned this painful lesson. Earlier this year, the security and password management company Splashdata ([splashdata.com/press/worstpasswords2013.htm](http://splashdata.com/press/worstpasswords2013.htm)) published the results of an analysis of millions of compromised passwords, including the 48 million passwords stolen during the October, 2013 data breach at Adobe, which were subsequently posted online by the cyber crooks. A disproportionately large number of users are still using simple, easy to guess passwords that make their online activities very vulnerable to identity theft. According to Splashdata, the top 10 of the most widely used passwords were (in order of most common and widely used): 123456, password, 12345678, qwerty, abc123, 123456789, 111111, 1234567, iloveyou, and adobe123. The list of most commonly used passwords published by Splashdata was actually much longer, a fact not lost on hackers and identity thieves. Since usernames and email addresses are very easy to find or deduce, someone wanting illicit access to an online bank account or email account only has to use a purloined username or email address and then sequentially try the most common passwords, which will then possibly give the hacker full access to those valuable accounts. If you are victimized in this manner, your bank balance is now theirs, not yours.

When I give security presentations, I am frequently told by some members of the audience that complex passwords, consisting of upper case letters, numbers, lower-case letters, and on some websites symbols like \$, !, &, and others characters, are too hard to remember, especially for all of the secured websites that they visit. These people have to make a decision; create, use, and manage different complex passwords for every online service that they visit, or face the high possibility of dire consequences. This is precisely why one of the most increasingly popular utility categories used online is a password manager. The better password managers can selectively create complex and random passwords, auto-fill usernames and passwords when requested by a webpage, selectively fill common forms with personal information (name, address, phone, etc.), notify the user if a password may have been compromised by a data breach on one of the visited websites, and perform other security services as well. A quick review of the major websites presents a lengthy list of password managers, but it seems that the same handful keep appearing as among the best in published reviews.

My primary "go to" website when looking for software is Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com, which has a listing under the heading "Best Free Web Form Filler and Pass-

word Manager" (techsupportalert.com/best-free-web-form-filler-password-manager.htm). Utilizing its widely respected volunteer community of thousands of geeks and nerds, Gizmo's posted ratings and evaluations of software are widely respected and followed. Gizmo's top rated password manager is LastPass (lastpass.com), available in both free and paid versions (\$12/year). LastPass was awarded the top rating of 5 out of 5 stars by the community evaluators, and given "Gizmo's Freeware award as the best product in its class!". To be honest and with open disclosure, I have been using LastPass Premium (the paid version) for several years and have found it indispensable; I have it on my desktop and laptop computers as well as my Android smart phone and my tablet. The free version of LastPass arguably the

Test Center Scorecard						
	Features	Ease of use	OS support	Setup	Value	Overall Score
1Password 4.0	8	8	8	7	8	<b>7.9</b> GOOD
Dashlane 2.4.1	9	8	7	8	7	<b>8.0</b> VERY GOOD
KeePass 2.26	10	7	8	7	10	<b>8.4</b> VERY GOOD
LastPass 3.1.2	10	8	8	8	9	<b>8.7</b> VERY GOOD
PasswordBox 1.3	8	8	7	8	8	<b>7.8</b> GOOD
SplashID Safe 7.2.3	7	7	8	7	7	<b>7.2</b> GOOD

most capable and comprehensive free password manager available, and is compatible with most major browsers (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Opera), most contemporary operating systems (Windows, Mac, Linux), and almost all mobile and portable operating systems (Android, iOS, Windows, Blackberry, Firefox OS, Windows Surface RT). The paid "Premium" version adds a few features such as better multifactor authentication, better access on some mobile phones, enhances sharing, provides priority technical support, allows better form filling on Windows applications, and other enhanced functionality. Both the paid Premium and the free versions seamlessly and automatically synchronize passwords between

the different devices. My LastPass can also do a security check to determine if any of my usernames and passwords have shown up on any of the listings from compromised online services.

### "Password" unseated by "123456" on SplashData's annual "Worst Passwords" list

The 2013 list of worst passwords, influenced by postings from the Adobe breach, demonstrates the importance of not basing passwords on the application or website being accessed

LOS GATOS, CA – SplashData has announced its annual list of the 25 most common passwords found on the Internet. For the first time since SplashData began compiling its annual list, "password" has lost its title as the most common and therefore Worst Password, and two-time runner-up "123456" took the dubious honor. "Password" fell to #2.



According to SplashData, this year's list was influenced by the large number of passwords from Adobe users posted online by security consulting firm Stricture Consulting Group following Adobe's well publicized security breach.

"Seeing passwords like 'adobe123' and 'photoshop' on this list offers a good reminder not to base your password on the name of the website or application you are accessing," says Morgan Slain, CEO of SplashData.

SplashData's list of frequently used passwords shows that many people continue to put themselves at risk by using weak, easily guessable passwords. Some other passwords in the Top Ten include "qwerty," "abc123," "111111," and "iloveyou."

"Another interesting aspect of this year's list is that more short numerical passwords showed up even though websites are starting to enforce stronger password policies," Slain said. For example, new to this year's list are simple and easily guessable passwords like "1234" at #16, "12345" at #20, and "000000" at #25.

SplashData, provider of the SplashID Safe line of password management applications, releases its annual list in an effort to encourage the adoption of stronger passwords. "As always, we hope that with more publicity about how risky it is to use weak passwords, more people will start taking simple steps to protect themselves by using stronger passwords and using different passwords for different websites."

The number two rated password manager on the Gizmo list is RoboForm (roboform.com), which was also awarded a 5 star rating by the Gizmo community. I had used the free version of RoboForm for several years until the free version ceased functioning on Firefox, which led to my switching to LastPass, a change which I do not regret. LastPass imported all of my passwords and other information from RoboForm. While the free version of RoboForm is also compatible with all major browsers and operating systems, as well as smart phones and tablets, the free version is currently limited to storing only 10 forms and passwords, while the much more powerful full version "RoboForm Everywhere for Win-

dows, Mac and Mobile", with unlimited storage of passwords and user information costs \$19.95 per year (half-price for the first year). According to the RoboForm website, the paid version offers "New simplified pricing - one license for all your computers and multiple devices - best value. The RoboForm Everywhere license allows you to use RoboForm software on all your Windows computers, Macs, and other mobile devices, and includes automatic synchronization of all your RoboForm data."

Other well rated, but less capable password managers that passed muster on the Gizmo forums include KeePass (4 star rating, unrestricted freeware), Password Safe (4 star rating, unrestricted freeware), PINS (3 1/2 star rating, unrestricted freeware), KeyWallet (3 star rating, unrestricted freeware, but not updated for any version of Windows newer than Windows XP), and Access Manager (3 star rating, unrestricted freeware).

Other respected online services have also rated and evaluated the major password managers, and arrived at somewhat similar rankings while including more of the paid password managers. A recent posting by InfoWorld Security Central on June 18, 2014 ([infoworld.com/d/security/review-the-best-password-managers-pcs-macs-and-mobile-devices-244519](http://infoworld.com/d/security/review-the-best-password-managers-pcs-macs-and-mobile-devices-244519)), titled "Review: The best password managers for PCs, Macs, and mobile devices", along with a subtitle, "6 local and cloud-based password managers make passwords stronger and online life easier for Windows, Mac, iOS, Android, BlackBerry, and Windows Phone users" somewhat mirrored Gizmo's findings, along with some additional candidates. The InfoWorld evaluations gave LastPass its highest final score of 8.7 out of 10, with a 10 for available features (tied with KeePass in terms of features), and scored or tied the highest in all of the other categories except for value; LastPass was given a score of 9, while KeePass (which is free) was given a 10.

KeePass was given the second highest composite score in the InfoWorld testing, with an 8.4 out of 10, faring well when compared to LastPass in each of the items on the scorecard, only

beating LastPass on value (free). On this InfoWorld scorecard, Dashlane came in third with a score of 8.0, followed by 1Password (7.9), PasswordBox (7.8), and SplashID Safe (7.2).

I am currently experimenting with PasswordBox ([passwordbox.com](http://passwordbox.com)), as they recently had a deal on one of the software daily deal sites offering an unlimited lifetime subscription for the paid version for only \$9.99, which was less than a single annual subscription for the full-featured paid version. PasswordBox also offers a feature rich free version for Windows, Mac, and most portable smart devices, all of which are immediately synchronized with each other, but the free version is limited to 25 passwords. I had PasswordBox import my LastPass information, and simultaneously keep both of them synchronized with each other as well as my laptop, smart phone, and tablet. On a literal side-by-side comparison, my first impression is that my LastPass Premium is more powerful than the paid version of PasswordBox, as PasswordBox has periodically displayed a popup indicating an inability to auto fill the information on some websites that I visit, but also states that they are aware of the problem and are working on a solution.

## Best Free Web Form Filler and Password Manager

Updated 18. November 2013 - 2:19 by [site.editor](#)

### Introduction

Products in this class are among the most useful of all PC utilities because they allow you to complete the common task of filling in web forms and logins by simply clicking a button, as well as allowing you to store program serial numbers and registration details in a secure electronic form.

They work by saving (in encrypted form) user IDs, passwords and other information needed by individual sites for later retrieval.

To login to a site you need only type in a single master password to allow retrieval of the specific password information for that site. This information is then used by the program to automatically login.

This greatly improves security because it allows different passwords to be assigned to individual sites without the need to remember them. And it makes the login process easy and quick.

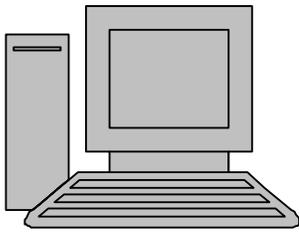
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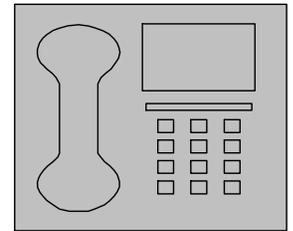
### Discussion

**LastPass** is a one of a kind product. Most password managers are either online or software only. It is the combination of both web service and software. With the web service you can access your data anywhere. The software which runs on your computer allows you to view your data even when you're not connected to the Internet. When you install the software, the plugins for IE and Firefox are automatically installed. There is now a plugin for Google Chrome as well. The plugin allows you to automatically fill forms. You will be logged in without even a click. You can always disable it if you don't like it. One thing I really like about LastPass is the Password Generator. The Bookmarklet is a lifesaver if you're on Chrome, Opera or just about any browser that supports JavaScript. The Bookmarklet does not have all the features of the plugin though, but it does allow you to fill passwords and forms, which is all you actually need. Did I mention you can store unlimited passwords? I personally have over 100 passwords stored on LastPass.

If you're worried about security or reliability, then let me tell you LastPass is as safe as it can possibly get. It uses the same encryption algorithm that the US Government uses for top secret data. The key to decrypt the data is only known to you, so the database is meaningless to hackers. All encryption/decryption occurs on your computer, not on the servers.



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6	7	8	9 MS Office, Access, Security SIG, New Horizons, Lee Rd. 7pm	10	11	12
13 WinSIG 1:15pm General Meeting 2:45pm Maitland Library, 501 S. Maitland Ave.	14	15	16 Virtual Photo & Video SIG, 7pm, Details at <i>cfcs.org</i>	17	18	19
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3 <b>THE CFCS Mailing Address is:</b> CFCS PO Box 520084, Longwood, FL 32752 Please do not use old ones, as your checks and other documents may be lost.	4	5 Board of Directors Meeting, Maitland Library 501 S. Maitland Ave., 6:30pm	6	7	8	9
10 WinSIG 1:15pm General Meeting 2:45pm Maitland Library, 501 S. Maitland Ave.	11	12	13 MS Office, Access, Security SIG, New Horizons, Lee Rd. 7pm	14	15	16
17	18 iPhone SIG iPad, iPod (iAnything) 1505 E. Colonial 7pm	19	20 Virtual Photo & Video SIG, 7pm, Details at <i>cfcs.org</i>	21	22	23
24	25	26 Tech-SIG; Tech Show & Tell or Problem Solving; World Gourmet Restaurant; 800 E. Altamonte Dr; 7pm	27	28	29	30
31	Sep 1 BUSSSLINE article deadline. .doc file format. Send to: editor@cfcs.org	2	3 Board of Directors Meeting, Maitland Library 501 S. Maitland Ave., 6:30pm	4	5	6 <b>Sept</b>



**Parking:**

Parking areas around Maitland Public Library noted in **RED**

**Directions:** From I-4, take

Maitland Boulevard exit. Head East on Maitland Boulevard until it crosses Maitland Avenue. Turn right on Maitland Avenue. Turn right onto Ventris Avenue after crossing the railroad tracks. The library is located at 501 S. Maitland Ave on the corner of Ventris.

From the Orlando/Winter Park area, take U.S. Hwy. 17-92 North to the intersection of Maitland Avenue. Turn Left. The library is on the left, next to the Maitland Civic Center. Turn Left onto Ventris Avenue to access our parking lot.

