



WE DO WINDOWS
THE WINDOW
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**CADDO-BOSSIER
 WINDOWS
 USER GROUP**

Shreveport – Bossier City
 Louisiana

www.shreveport.com/cbwug

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Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group Newsletter

February, 2001

Windows ME

by
 David M. Huckabee

Do I need to upgrade to the NEW microsoft Windows ME, in a word yes and no. Some of the features found in WinME are already available for Win98SE.

Windows Media Player 7 is available for download for Win98SE and is already in WinME. The Media Player has been enhanced to tune in Internet radio stations and to create categorized playlists of your MP3, audio CDs, and video clips. Third-party programs like WinAmp, Real-Audio, and others that cater to the multimedia users can be purchased, but this free add-in is provided as a download for Win98SE or comes with WinME.

Internet Explorer 5.5 can be downloaded for Win98SE or it is installed with WinME. IE 5.5 works a little faster than previous versions. System Restore is a product similar to Adaptec's GoBack. You can set a restore point and then after installing a program that crashes your system you can recover back to that checkpoint just as if you hadn't installed the offending program. System Restore interacts with System Update by setting the checkpoint before installing those updates.

System Update allows you to connect with Microsoft's Website to download system enhancements and patches like with Win98SE but will work in the background while other things are being done on the Internet. After download, Update sets a

checkpoint with System Restore and asks if you want to install those updates.

WinME allows you to format a diskette in the background while you do other things like play FreeCell. WinME does not allow a restart in DOS mode. Everything DOS runs from Virtual DOS inside Windows. Format /s is not supported, so there is no way to format a diskette and place system files on it. The auto-exec.bat and config.sys files used in DOS are virtually useless, other than for setting a path to files.

There are a lot of new icons that come with WinME that look like its big cousin Windows 2000.

To close, WinME is a lot more reliable but if your system runs just fine, you might not really need to upgrade. The operating system is a lot more polished but with all the add-ins takes up more hard disk space. If you are looking to do a clean install, be prepared to do a lot of messaging of the system and have a backup of the old system. I'm not saying that you will or will not get the system installed, but it is not an easy install.

The Windows ME Operating System in the blue box is \$59.95 for upgrades from Win98 or 98SE. The cost for upgrade from other Windows products in the white box are \$89.95 street price. If you can find the blue box get it, the white box has the same thing in it. The blue box was a promotional thing until January 15, 2001. There are some new systems that are being delivered with WinME installed NOW.

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MEETINGS

Thursday February 8, 2001

Thursday March 8, 2001

Marshall and Associates

819 Shreveport-Barksdale Hwy
 Shreveport, Louisiana

Meetings 2nd Thursday of each month

7 p.m.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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Ark-La-Tex Computer Sheaux

~Future Dates~

February 10, 2001

May 12, 2001

August 11, 2001

November 17, 2001



www.computersheaux.org

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ComputerSheaux - Saturday February 10

THE WINDOW

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Submit articles for newsletter, in RTF file format, by last day of month to *both* Glenda and Jay.

The opinions expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors or publisher. Mention of products by their trade name does not in any way constitute endorsement by the editors or publisher.

The Caddo-Bossier Windows User Group is a tax exempt, non-profit club.

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~Thank You~

We want to express our gratitude to:

Bill Marshall –Marshall & Assoc. for letting our group hold our monthly meetings in his conference room and for assisting us in obtaining our Non-Profit status.

Gary Galloway – ARK-LA-TEX Network Services for generously providing internet access for CBWUG

IDT for the donation of a computer for the clubs' use.

ShreveNet, Inc. – For providing web space for our club.

Regions Bank on Youree Drive for providing us with a checking account at no charge.

Bryan Rawls for donating the C-BWUG banner.

~A QUICK TIP~

TITLEBAR TIPS

There is an easier way to toggle an open program's window between maximize, to fill the screen, and restore, to make the window smaller, than clicking on the Maximize and Restore buttons on the program's title bar. Double click on a bare spot in the ac-

tual title bar at the top of the screen, where these buttons reside. If the screen is maximized, double clicking on the title bar will make it smaller and visa versa. Hitting that big long title bar is a lot easier than hitting one of the little buttons. Try it.

President's Page



Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group Meeting

January 11, 2001

The meeting started with a short business meeting. There were no nominations from the floor for officers for the New Year, so Ed Waites made a motion to elect the new officers by acclamation, it was seconded and passed. The officers for the year 2001 are Bernie Conradi, President; Wayne Ebert, Vice President; Glenda Conradi, Secretary, and Keith O'Kelley, Treasurer. The Treasurer's report was accepted. Then we had a short question and answer session. We had questions on the Autoexec.bat file in Windows Me, installing programs and virus programs. Our guest speaker for the evening, Erin McCauley of AT&T Wireless, did not show up, we regret this and hope she can come to one of our future meetings. For the rest of the meeting we had a session on the planning and buying of the components necessary to build a new home computer system. Julius Windham has volunteered to buy the components at the next ComputerSheaux and then we will assemble the computer at one of our future meetings. A lot of time was spent on deciding on which components would be best for the system he wants for his home. The door prizes for the evening were: Spin 50 Speakers won by Wayne Ebert; Monitor Microphone won by Ed Waites; and Norton Personal Firewall 2001 won by Jack Burke.

If you have something that you think the rest of the group would be interested in, please do not hesitate to submit an article about it. Send your newsletter articles to both Jay Graff and Glenda Conradi as an email attachment in rtf format to jay@jaygraff.com and glenda@conradi.com.

Bernie Conradi, President Caddo-Bossier Windows Users Group

Is Newer Always Better?

By Jay Graff

There was a time, not too long ago, that whenever a new product came out, or an upgrade to an older one, I couldn't wait to get it. My belief was that if it was newer, it had to be better. **NOT!!!!** I couldn't have been more wrong.

I certainly can follow the logic. People are always in demand for newer and better products and those that do not adhere to the upgrade game are soon left behind. But recently I have come to understand that just because a new or upgraded product is introduced, it may be newer, but it isn't necessarily better.

I can think of at least 8 or 10 programs where this is the case. Whenever a company puts out an upgrade, they always include new features. But almost invariably, they leave some off that were available on a previous version. Not only that, in their quest for new, they usually have to make it bigger. A good example is Corel. The earlier versions (5 and below) were relatively small programs that left an extremely small footprint on your hard drive. From 6 on, it kept getting bigger and bigger until today, the smallest installation you could probably get away with is more than 300 - 400 mb. For that reason, I stuck with Corel 5. Another one is Print Shop Deluxe. I have been using Print Shop Ensemble III for a long time. It is small and very easy to work with. I once got sucked up into trying Print Shop 5 (I don't know which version they are up to now) and soon realized that I needed a computer like they have at MIT to run the thing. It took up tons of hard drive space, but more important, it ate resources like I eat M&M's. Not to mention the fact that it was not very user friendly. I think

that lasted a month and I took it off and put the old version back on.

The same principle applies to Operating systems. I have recently upgraded my OS from Win 98 to ME. There are lots of neat features about ME, but I keep finding things I wish they had not changed.

Don't get me wrong, I totally agree with the need for change. If we never changed, we would all still be driving model T's and living in log cabins. But I think change should not be made for the sake of just changing. I think there should be a need for it and it should come as a result of what people want.

I don't see this changing anytime soon though. I guess I'll just keep on with my older versions of programs

Backups--An Alternative

*By
Jack Burke*

Computer experts will normally recommend that you use a tape system (cost about \$300 plus or minus) and do a complete backup of your system rather frequently. My sister does this every night since her husband is an attorney and she manages the administrative side of his home business. What this does is back up every piece of information that resides inside your computer--a business can ill afford otherwise for obvious reasons.

As a home user, I go against the experts and find that this type of procedure is costly, time consuming, and probably unnecessary for the average person. Don't get me wrong--backing up your system is vital for all users but a taped system is possibly excessive. What you are doing when you backup a system is preserve your information in case your computer crashes or you lose your operating

system. Only you can determine what you want to save in the event of one of these catastrophes; and, believe me they do happen. For example, I am interested insaving and updating only the data files and not the installed applications. I figure that I can reinstall all of the applications if a catastrophe happens. The data files, however, can never be replaced if you lose your system. What I mean by data files is word processing files, financial files, address books, mailing lists, your Favorite Internet settings (Bookmarks), etc.

After a taped backup, the second way that you can back up your system, and possibly the easiest, is to use the backup utility found in Windows 98. This can be found at Start/Programs/Accessories/System Tools/Backup. If it is not available there, you will have to go to Control Panel/Add or Remove Programs/Windows Startup/System Tools and install this utility; you will need your original installation disk to do this procedure. When using this utility, you will decide what you want to retain in the event of an emergency. Sometimes you have to poke around your files in order to find the ones that contain the data. For example, My Documents is actually the data file for your word processor. Don't forget when you are backing up, you want to back your files up to a separate media--for example, a CDRW disk or a Zip disk. This is very important since the whole point of backing up is to preserve your data in the event of the loss of your computer so you want this data 'outside' your computer.

The next choice is my personal selection. What I do is a combination of a couple of things and this is what I will call the third method. I have Norton System Works and use Norton Utilities (one program inside Works) to monitor the everyday functioning of my computer. One of the functions in Norton Utilities is called a Zip Rescue

(Continued on page 4)



Playing James Bond!?! or That's a Camera!?!

By Wayne Ebert

If you are referring to this gadget I have in my shirt pocket, yes it is a digital camera. To be honest, it is more than a digital camera; it is a digital camcorder and a personal computer camera that can be used on or off your computer. The name is PenCam Trio, by Aiptek, that is available at Staples, or on line at CompUSA for \$89.99 [see SKU 277106]. You connect it to your computer by a USB port to use as a PCcamera or to download the 80 to 320 snapshots you have stored in it's internal 8 MB of SDRAM. The number of snapshots in storage relates to stored image resolutions of 352 X 268 pixels or 176 X 144 pixels. You may adjust to 640 X 480 resolution, but can store only 26 images at that resolution. Some other features for this versatile camera are its self-timer and Continuous mode that continues to take pictures as long as you press and hold down the shutter button. More impressive is the bundled software, Pen Cam Manager, ULead Video Studio, CyberLink VideoLive Mail, ULead Photo Explorer, Microsoft NetMeeting, and drivers for Windows98/ME/2000. A camera stand and wrist strap, along with the single camera to USB cable, are in the package. Minimum computer specifications are Windows 98 or above, with a P 100 or above, 32 MB RAM with 64 MB desired, a Video card with at least 2 MB of RAM, at least a 4X CD-ROM, and an available USB port. The camera is powered by two 1.5 Volt alkaline batteries or from your PC's USB port. Overview: A good, inexpensive, way to learn video and digital picture procedures.

(Continued from page 3)

program. It uses a combination of my floppy drive and my Iomega Zip system to copy the essential parameters of the system. I update the Zip Rescue program about once a month. In the event of an emergency you install both disks and it walks you through a recovery of your system. Essentially this system monitors all of the changes going on inside your computer particularly your Registry. It has saved me twice in the past but even it may not save you from a catastrophic failure of your drive or system. One thing to be aware of is that Zip Rescue does not save your data files.

The other half then is capturing the data files manually onto a separate media--in my case a Zip disk but many folks use a CDRW disk. You need space so a floppy disk may not be large enough. In addition to the files that I mentioned earlier, I also have a folder set aside which contains any important programs, which I have downloaded from the Internet (for example, Real Player, Netscape, etc). I copy this folder also to the Zip Disk--far and away this is my biggest folder (80Mb). By doing this it keeps me from having to go back and download all of these programs once again from the Net--I simply have to copy the folder back to the drive and execute the applications to get them reinstalled. The only other file that I treat separately is my Quicken financial data. Quicken has their own backup program and I just use this on a regular basis to backup Quicken data.

That's about it--hope this helps a little bit! I can not emphasize enough how important it is to have some form of a backup recovery program. Have you ever had your computer freeze up and lost a word processing file halfway through the document completion and you could not save

it----most people have and you re-invent the English language when it happens. Multiply this a thousand fold and that is the problem that you will have if your system crashes and you have not preserved your data. That is the reason for a back up procedure and it is a vital part of your activities. Thank goodness I had a sound backup program when I lost Windows catastrophically several months ago. I had a long and arduous recovery; but, at least I did not lose my data and that is the whole point of a backup program.

~Web Sites~

Kim Komando

www.komando.com/

Help, tips, links and downloads from the popular Kim Komando.

Heloise

www.heloise.com/

Heloise web site where you can find all sorts of household hints.

CNET

www.cnet.com/

A place where you will find a lot of Web sites to explore

January Program

We regretted that, due to circumstances beyond her control, Erin McCawley, with AT&T was unable to present the program for our January 2001 meeting.

MISTEAKS

Some Of you may have found some mistakes in this Newsletter. There is a reason for this; Some people are always looking for them and in an effort to please every one, we included some.