This Month At NOPC

Peachtree Accounting Software

by

Matthew Person

Inside this issue:

Spring Cleaning

Preventing Popups,
Removing SpyWare,
AdWare,
and other unwanted stuff
from your computer -
a brief How-To and recommendations
by John Palmer

Your computer runs really slow? You get popup ads when you go on the Internet, even on sites that you believe are pretty much ad free? Internet Explorer starts with a different page than you're used to - and you can't change it back? You clean up the computer so it runs fine - then it's all fouled up after another family member uses it?

Without explaining why - there is plenty of information on the internet that can do a much better job of that - I'm just giving some basic prevention and

Our presentation for May will focus on Peachtree accounting software. Peachtree has several products for small businesses. Mr. Matthew Person will show us some of the many features and functions in this family of products and answer any questions.

Mr. Person is the owner of Matthew Person, CPA & Associates. Mr. Person and his firm provide accounting and tax services, financial advising, business consulting, and non-profit organizations. He specializes in small business accounting software including Peachtree, QuickBooks and PC Law. He has taught Peachtree and QuickBooks classes for clients and the general public for the last five years. He is also an associate for K2 Enterprises (a

specialist in technology seminars) where he teaches Peachtree, QuickBooks, Excel and Internet courses for state CPA societies. Mr. Person is a graduate of the University of Mississippi where he received a Bachelor of Accountancy degree. He has worked both in industry as well as public accounting for the last ten years where he gained a vast variety of work experience. His professional memberships include the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Louisiana Certified Public Accountants and the New Orleans Chapter of Certified Public Accountants. In addition, he is a Certified Peachtree Software Consultant, a Certified Pro Advisor for QuickBooks, and holds a Series 6 Securities License.

removal info below - with the emphasis on FREE software to do this.

Prevention:
Use any browser but Internet Explorer (FYI- AOL is just a pretty face on Internet Explorer and most of the IE stuff applies to AOL) -
most of the unwanted stuff out there only works on Internet Explorer - both because it is the biggest target (most users) and has the most known weaknesses. Other browsers - (I recommend *FireFox* from *www.mozilla.org*) such as Opera, Netscape etc may have their own vulnerabilities, but aren't the target of most of this stuff. (If you must use Internet Explorer, at least try to use the latest version your system supports, and install all the relevant Windows Updates aka security patches).

IGNORE THOSE unsolicited pop-up messages that say something to the effect that "your browser may have spyware intalled". These tend to appear whether you do or not – they're just ads to encourage you to buy or install software that may not be as good as the free stuff I recommend below – and may in fact be spyware itself (SpyBan and Spy Wiper seem to be two of these offenders)! The good news is that the FTC may be taking action against this soon…Generally, if you didn't ask for it, don't install it!

Pop-Up Stopper Free Edition - stops many popups. The update to IE6.o due out Real Soon Now will include a feature to prevent popups; current versions of Netscape and FireFox already have this, and some of the other browsers may.

SpyWareBlaster disables ActiveX controls known to be bad news (Active X controls are a way for Internet Explorer to basically install software on your computer - whether you want it or not.... newer versions (currently 3.1) add a paid-subscription to auto-update. Manual updates are still free.

IE-SpyAd is best described by this excerpt from their website:
http://www.staff.uiuc.edu/~ehowes/resource.htm#IESPY AD
IE-SPYAD is a Registry file (IE-ADS.REG) that adds a long list of sites and domains associated with known advertisers, marketers, and crapware pushers to the Restricted sites zone of Internet Explorer. Once this list of sites and domains is "merged" into your Registry, most marketers, advertisers, and crapware pushers on the Net will not be able to use cookies, ActiveX controls, Java applets, or scripting to compromise your privacy or your

PC while you surf the Net. Nor will they be able to use your browser to push unwanted pop-ups, cookies, or auto-installing programs on you. Download and install IE-SPYAD fairly often to update its protection.

Cure - removing stuff that already got on:

AdAware6, Spybotsd12 (aka SpyWare Search and Destroy) should BOTH be installed - they are complementary tools, in that what one misses, the other tends to find. Both of these scan your computer and allow you to remove the bad stuff they recognize (update their definitions before scanning!). *AdAware* runs quickly, should finish in 10 minutes or less. *SpyBot* Search and Destroy is a lot slower, but worth running just in case *AdAware* misses something.

BEWARE - there are a great many pieces of software with names similar to SpyBot Search and Destroy - most are commercial products that I have not tried out. At least one of these similar named products actually installs spyware on your computer - so be careful what you download and where you download it from. Try to get each from the developer's website, if possible, so you don't get a product that has been tampered with!

CWShredder checks for and removes one bad (hard to remove) family of malware... download and run it if *AdAware* or *SpyBot* can't remove something with a name similar to CoolWebSearch (aka CWS) hijacker.

Startup List and *HiJackThis* are to be avoided unless directed by an "expert" - that is someone very familiar with Windows and Spyware, adware etc...
- the first makes a list of things that the computer will run at startup. An "expert" can determine if anything here is not good - a lot of cryptic stuff here will be OK.

HiJackThis likewise shows everything associated with POSSIBLE browser hijacks or compromises - MOST THINGS HERE ARE OK- DO NOT "FIX"anything here unless an "expert" directs you to... (Don't even bother running HiJackThis unless you're really curious or have someone working with you to resolve a problem...

Resources:
Download sites:
www.panicware.com - PopUp Stopper Free Edition, enhanced versions for $$$.
www.mozilla.org - FireFox browser and other open-source products.
www.netscape.com - Netscape browser
www.javacoolsoftware.com - SpyWareBlaster

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http://www.staff.uiuc.edu/~ehowes/resource.htm#IESPY AD - IE_SPYAD - the download link is WAY DOWN the page!
www.lavasoft.de - AdAware, enhanced versions for $$$. links to mirror sites to download from.
security.kolla.de – SpyBot Search & Destroy
www.merijn.org - download site for CWShredder, Hi-JackThis and StartupList (download these from www.spywareinfo.com/~merijn/downloads.html if that address doesn't work).

Information:
www.wilderssecurity.com - Security forums, discussions on most of these products and current spyware and other current (related) topics.
www.wilders.org - besides a lot of info, links to FREE services & FREE tools! – including most of those mentioned here.
www.spywareinfo.com
www.safer-networking.org
www.doxdesk.com

Microsoft Security Newsletter Notes

Updating your Microsoft Software: Windows Update is an online service that you can use to download free updates to Microsoft software.
For more information click on this site:
http://www.microsoft.com/security/articles/swupdat es.asp

Reduce your Virus Risk with Uploaded Antivirus Software: A virus is a program that can wreak havoc on your computer and use your Internet connection to spread itself to other computers, usually those of your co-workers, friends, and family. You can prevent many viruses by only opening e-mail attachments when you know where the e-mail came from and what the attachment is. Unfortunately, sometimes that isn't even enough.
For more information click on this site:
http://www.microsoft.com/security/articles/antivirus .asp

Fighting unwanted e-mail (SPAM): If you send or receive e-mail, you probably get spam. Maybe a *lot* of spam. Ever wonder why you get so much junk e-mail? It's a lucrative business. It's cheap to send out millions, even billions, of e-mail messages.
For more information click on this site:

http://www.microsoft.com/security/articles/fightspa m.asp.

Handling Unwanted e-mail (SPAM):
So despite your best efforts, you have received e-mail you didn't ask for—and don't want. What can you do? First, ignore it. Second, report the people who did it.
For more information click on this site:
http://www.microsoft.com/security/articles/spamopt ions.asp

How to safely troubleshoot your system
By Siles Bazerman,
User Group Columnist,
Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, California

As long-term readers of this column are aware, I belong to a number of special interest Yahoo groups. Over the past few months I have been having a problem on several of them opening files. It finally dawned on me that it was with one particular file "server" (for lack of a better word, as I really do not know if it is a real server, a virtual server or a file folder at Yahoo). As Yahoo groups have grown they have been adding areas for storage. They now have f1 to f6. My problem was with f4 files.

Questions submitted to Yahoo Group Help were of no help at all as usual. This area is preprogrammed and will answer questions regardless of whether or not the answer is related to the question you asked. Apparently you are only supposed to have problems that fit in their preconceived program. This was not one of them.

By the way, this is being written not to show how clever I am at problem solving, but to show an example of how to problem solve. The most important utility to use is the one behind your eyes and between your ears. Before you take any action think carefully, back up, and think again. Then take one step at a time. If you do several at once and it fixes the problem which one was the fix? What can be restored to before the fix?

Back to the task at hand. I did try to view the files using both HAL and Barbie. I received the same error on both; page cannot be displayed at this time. This occurred also in safe mode with networking where no drivers are loaded and most programs are not started. Even turning off all startup items was no help. Accessing the files from my son's computer was successful. This indicated

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the problem was at my end and not a glitch at Yahoo.

Now it was time to think. Even though both HAL and Barbie are both running Windows XP Pro, they have totally different programs loaded. This included the anti virus programs. So, why the similar results? Then I realized they both use the same router to access the DSL line. The next logical step would be to disconnect the router. Before we do, let us take a look at the rule of unintended consequences. What will happen if we connect to the Internet without the router?

First, my network would go down. No big deal as that is a temporary condition restored with the router reconnected. But, the router also serves as a hardware firewall. This function would be lost, and in today's atmosphere I would never run on the Internet without a firewall, even for a short test. There are just too many flakes out there trying to cause as much damage as possible. So, I made sure my anti virus program had the latest updates. I also updated Ad-aware, and Spybot – Search and Destroy. I also enabled the built-in Windows XP software firewall. Then I created a new restore point and also backed up my C drive with V2i Protector. If I did somehow become infected with a worm or Trojan I had a way out. Since there were no other problems that I could see I removed the router and tried to view the files again. Success!

In order to protect the system while continuing to troubleshoot the problem I reinstalled the router. I also disabled the Windows XP firewall, as I really do not like it. It does have its functions however. The next step was to go to the web site of the router manufacturer, D-link, and see what information was available. Although there were no FAQs covering this problem, there was a firmware update. I downloaded the instructions for performing the update.

I printed out the instructions, as the upgrade cannot be accomplished with much else running. This is an online update that requires a reset of the router and a reconfiguration of it. I then reconnected with the web site and updated the firmware. Reset and reconfiguration followed. Now for the moment of truth. I again tried to access the problem files, and could now view them perfectly. I still do not really know why only some files were inaccessible before, but I had the cure. I can only assume that there was something in the address of the section that the router did not like.

I hope I have shown you something about how to proceed with trouble-shooting and about the hidden traps to look out for.

E-mail is 32 years old
By Jim Smith,
President, Business and Professional Microcomputer Users Group, Inc. (BPMUG), Connecticut

Spring has finally arrived and the winter weather is starting to give way to warm, sunny days. March was the anniversary of Email. Yes, in March of 1972 the very first basic e-mail program was written and the "@" sign was chosen for its "at" meaning. Here it is 32 years later and email is a mainstream means of communication and an normal tool for most businesses and for personal use.

Naturally with this handy mainstream concept comes those wanting to abuse it. I would hope that most of you are aware of some of the tricks and hoaxes that can be offered via email. For the others, I'd like to review some of the more common ones so you won't be tricked.

First, there are the obvious scams trying to get you to buy endless supplies of gimmicks that promise to make many of your body parts larger or somehow enhanced. Less obvious are sites that promise prescription drugs for bargain rates and ones with Hormone Growth solutions, or great mortgages on-line or credit repairs and many others. Much like the snake oil sales team of yesteryear, most of these are scams. The occasional one that is legit should also be considered suspect since anyone desperate enough to jump on the wagon with the snake oil sales team is not likely to be around for long enough to deliver anyway. Businesses that use unsolicited commercial email
(spam) to sell their products should be viewed with great caution.

Then there are hoaxes that alert you to something that request that you spread it to everyone in your email address book. Any time you get an email that tells you to spread it around, think about it first! Most likely it is a hoax. The most recent one I've seen is the one that asks everyone to not buy gasoline from the big producers in order to prove a point. Searching on-line will give plenty of reasons why this is a farce but it still doesn't
stop people from continuing to send it around. Of course there are plenty of hoaxes around about viruses that will eat your computer unless you send it along to everyone else you know. There are jokes that beg to be sent to everyone and there are emailed chain letters that promise doom and gloom for breaking the cycle. Don't continue to clutter up the email system with these.

Here's something to consider -- if you do what you are told and send these to everyone in your address book, and they turn around and add the addresses from their list, and it goes through that for a while, eventually it will likely land in the hands of someone that will sell all of those email addresses to junk emailers who will delight in sending a huge assortment of get-rich-quick and body enhancing scams to everyone listed. I get enough of those spams without friends adding my email address to those lists.

The other popular email hoax is the endless variation on the Nigerian widow with too much money from her late husband and looking for a trusting American with a bank account ready to enter into a business deal in exchange for a percentage. These scams have been around for longer than email has but, rather than using US Postal Service and phones to deliver the pitch, email is a much cheaper way to fish for unsuspecting victims.

Speaking of fishing, there is another hoax that is know by its variation, "Phishing". Phishing is when someone tries to get you to divulge credit card or passwords by pretending to be legit. If you get an email from PayPal asking you to "Click Here" and confirm your account info or from Citibank asking you to verify your credit card number, or from EBay asking you to type in your password so they can keep your account active, these phishing trips are hoaxes! Do not fall for them no matter how legit they appear to be. If you are not sure of something like that, be suspicious. Assume first that it is a phishing expedition rather than assuming it is legit. With a keen sense of skepticism, many of these hoaxes will become obvious. They prey on our not thinking too much but just doing as we are asked. Most people that fall for them are thoroughly embarrassed after it is over because they realized that if they had stopped to think about it they would have realized the absurdity of it. Don't be hooked in a phishing expedition!

So with 32 years of emailing behind us, there are many wonderful things about email and some things to watch out for. I've given you a few of them... it is up to you to stay alert to many of the other ones that are out there. BPMUG is a great resource for those wanting to find out whether something that sounds too good to be true, is true or not. Don't be taken in. Stop to ponder it first and then verify it. Then if you find an amazing deal to get rich quick that you just know will work... don't share it with me. I probably won't believe it anyway.

Now get out from behind your computers for a few minutes and have a wonderful Spring!

Do you use one space or two spaces at the end of a sentence?

By June Hall, Editor,
Windows on the Rockies User Group, Colorado

Like most people I was taught to use two spaces at the end of a sentence when using a typewriter. But when I started editing the company newsletter in the l980s, I was taught to use one space at the end of a sentence in published material.

If you type the question at www.google.com, the websites are numerous and contain contradictory answers, replies, and opinions.

Original typewriters had monospaced fonts. Monospaced type is text produced by characters that are evenly spaced. A "W" takes up just as much room as an "l." Thus, around skinny letters there was more space than around wide letters. To clear everything up, it was decided that an extra space should be added after a sentence to make it easier to see where one sentence ended and the next began.

In the very early days two spaces were also used in published material, but then along came the lead-casting Linotype machine. The linotype used wedges for spaces, rectangles for letters. Alter filling the line as close as possible, the operator would pull a handle, and the wedges would be forced upward, expanding (and thereby justifying) the line o' type, which would then be cast in lead. If the operator typed two spaces in a row, you had two wedges next to each other, and that tended to gum up the operation. So only one space was used.

On Woodys Watch (www.woodyswatch.com), Woody told us about all the mail—friendly mail, angry mail, congratulatory mail, why-don't-you-check-your-facts mail, my-teacher-taught-me-this-and-my-teacher-ain't-stupid mail—he received after making a somewhat tongue–in-cheek remark about "cleaning up after people who inevitably type two spaces after every period." Woody ended by stating if you want to sell what you write, use one period because that's the way the industry works nowadays.

A copy editor at The University of Chicago (Chicago Manual of Style) thinks, "In our efficient, modern world,

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there is not room for two spaces at the end of a sentence."

Publishers want single spaces after periods. Most desktop publishers believe desktop publishing (electronic type-setting) should follow the commercial publishers rule, "One space at the end of a sentence."

Two spaces can cause problems with line breaks in certain programs. Web pages use only one space between sentences. HTML is set up to only display one space no matter how many are typed. A browser, like Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer, will only display one.

Some people using word processing state, ''those of us who use word processing software are no longer typists but typographers. While our typewriter keyboards limited our capabilities in creating text, our word processors allow us to do what professional typesetters have been doing for centuries. Consequently, many of the rules we learned as typists do not apply in the world of word processing.''

The majority of people who never do desktop publishing have no reason to change from using two spaces. Even some publishers prefer using two spaces in their personal correspondence and notes.

After getting used to using only one space at the end of a sentence in writing for published material, I use one space for everything—most everything. I have to watch myself if I type a letter for my husband as he wants two spaces. One of the first things I do when I receive an article for a newsletter is to go to Edit/Replace and put in two spaces to be replaced by one space.

I liked the website with the info below:

"**Should sentences be separated by one space or two spaces?**"

"**Yes.**"

Laughing is good exercise.
It's like jogging on the inside.
Submitted by Don Herrmann, Treasurer, NOPCC

SECRET GUIDES STILL AVAILABLE

We continue to get rave reviews for "The Secret Guide to Computers" reference books from users who have bought them. Just about every month, we sell out our supply and must take orders for later delivery. If you are just about ready to get any Secret Guides, let Carl Henderson know, in advance, either at secretary@nopc.org or 466-3954. He will do his best to have enough copies on hand for you. Still priced at $15.00 each, it's a great bargain for computer novices and more experienced users alike.

Non-PC Humor

Number 1 Country and Western song of all Time is:
"I Haven't Gone To Bed With Any Ugly Women,
But I Sure Woke Up With A Few."

Submitted by A.J. Okamoto
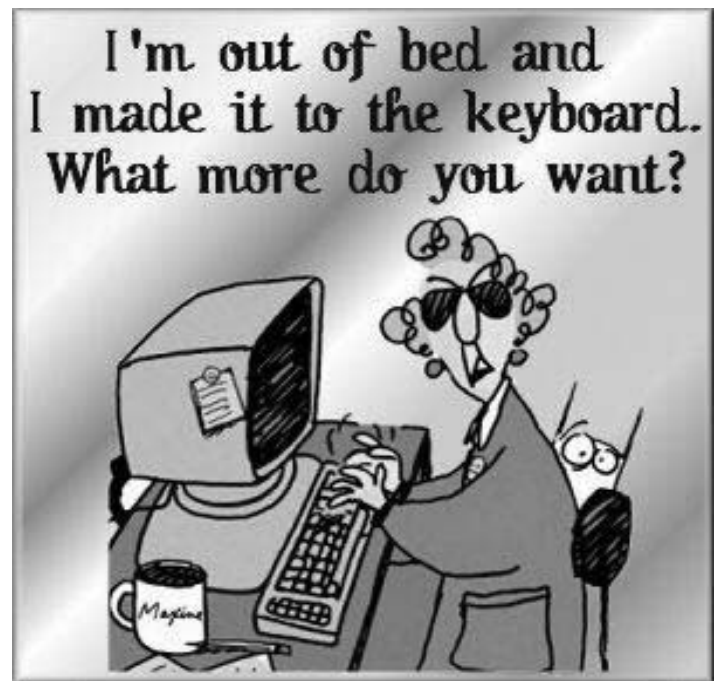
I'm out of bed and I made it to the keyboard. What more do you want?

NOPCC Directory

Elected Officers

President	Ray Paternostro	president@nopc.org	737-9099
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WADSIG	Manuel Dennis III	wadsig-owner@listbot.com	835-7656
Web Lab	Edward Jahncke	editor@nopc.org	897-1205

Other Important Numbers / Addresses

Club Hotline	Recorded messages. Meeting Information. Open 24 Hours	887-5746
NOPCC BBS	Bulletin Board System for members. The original way to PC communicate.	486-7249
NOPCC Web Site	On the World Wide Web. Our own home page and club information.	*www.nopc.org*

May 2004

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 **Living with Home Electronics WTIX 890AM 10:00a-11:00a**
2 **Computer Solutions WSMB 1350AM 11:00a-12:00a**	3 VBLG MCann's 6:30p-8:30p	4	5 **NOPC Gen Mtg J.D. Meisler 6:30p-8:30p**	6	7	8 **Living with Home Electronics WTIX 890AM 10:00a-11:00a**
9 **Computer Solutions WSMB 1350AM 11:00a-12:00a**	10 VBLG MCann's 6:30p-8:30p	11	12 **NOPC BOD McCann's 6:30p-8:30p**	13 NOPC Web Lab @ McCann's 6:30p-8:30p	14	15 **Living with Home Electronics WTIX 890AM 10:00a-11:00a**
16 **Computer Solutions WSMB 1350AM 11:00a-12:00a**	17 VBLG MCann's 6:30p-8:30p	18 Genealogy SIG @ Mccann's 6:30p-830p	19	20 New User's SIG @ McCann's 6:30p-8:30p	21	22 **Living with Home Electronics WTIX 890AM 10:00a-11:00a**
23 **Computer Solutions WSMB 1350AM 11:00a-12:00a**	24 VBLG MCann's 6:30p-8:30p	25	26 Digital Media SIG @ McCann's 7:00p-9:00p	27 Internet SIG @ McCann's 7:00p-9:00p	28	29 **Living with Home Electronics WTIX 890AM 10:00a-11:00a**
30 **Computer Solutions WSMB 1350AM**	31 VBLG MCann's 6:30p-8:30p					

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