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Welcome to the Spring edition of my Computer Tips Newsletter!

Important Update:

For those who did not get my Holiday Newsletter you should know that I have started my own computer assistance services under the name of **"The Computer Man"**. I am no longer affiliated with any other computer service company.

I will be continuing to provide the same guaranteed quality of service in Training, troubleshooting and system installation and setup.

I hope you will continue to call when you need my assistance and I do appreciate that so many of you have referred your friends and relatives to me. Thank you very, very much...

I can be reached at 927-1428 or send e-mail to thecomputerman8@yahoo.com

Note to My Comcast Cable Clients:

I hope I do not lose contact with you because of the comcast change-over issue. I understand that the only change to everyone's e-mail address will be the changing of the last part of the address from @home.com to @comcast.net.

If that is the only change, I will be able to easily adjust my address list to accommodate that change. However, I have seen that comcast has made slight changes other than that to some of their customers e-mail addresses. If that is the case for you, and the first part of your address has changed I would appreciate it if you would let me know your new address so that I can continue to send you my TIPS newsletters.

☐ Now for my latest Tips:

Column Sorting:

Here are some cool column tricks!

Have you ever needed to find something in a folder that had hundreds of files in it? Well, you usually know something about the file. If it's the name, then you're all set. But maybe you're not sure of the name, although

you do know it was created in the last day or so. Or maybe you know what type of file it is, just not the name or the last time it was modified.

What about trying to select all the same types of files in a folder? You know, maybe you want to take all the JPEGs out and stick them in another location. Well, it would take awhile if they weren't all together.

So, what can you do?

Well, sort your columns, of course!

If you click the top of any column in Windows Explorer, it will list the contents of that folder in order based on that column.



For example, if you click the Modified column, you'll find that it lists the files in the folder based on the last date they were modified. It will sort A-Z the first time you click, then Z-A on the next click. The example above shows the columns sorted by size.

This trick also works with other programs. For example, if you click the column headings in Outlook Express, you can sort your e-mail by the column heading (i.e. subject, date received, etc). I use this little trick all the time to help me locate e-mail.

Leave It Run, Or Not?

I often get questions asking whether you should leave your computer run all the time or shut it down.

I'll give you the thoughts from both sides and let you decide.

Leave it on:

The electronic components within the computer tend to last longer if they aren't constantly cooling off and warming back up. Additionally, you don't get any kind of initial "spike" in power when your machine is first turned on (not a big problem if you have an ATX type motherboard - most newer computers do). Finally, it's much more convenient to just plop down in front of your computer and start working than to sit through a lengthy boot-up.

Turn it off:

Your hard drive may last longer, especially if your computer doesn't put the drive on "standby" after a certain amount of idle time. The constant spinning of your hard drive motor can wear out the internal bearings. I personally don't think this a big deal. Newer hard drives will probably be in good service longer than the computer they live in.

Another "turn it off" argument is that you'll save on your electric bill. Depending on your machine, it uses the same power as one or more 100 watt light bulbs.

Those are the main reasons both ways.

My opinion?

I let it run during the day when I'm using it and shut it off at night. I turn mine off if I am leaving the house most of the time.

If you're going to use it in the morning and then again in the afternoon, leave it run till you're finished for the day.

I used to leave mine run all day , but a few things have changed my mind.

For one, any chip faster than 133Mhz needs a cooling fan to keep it from burning itself into a silicon cinder. These fans are not totally reliable.

If I'm using the computer and am getting signs that I have a CPU that's overheating (your computer will act "really" strange, some will play a little tune through the internal speaker), I can shut things down and get it fixed. If it happens in the middle of the night, I'll have a roasted Computer Processor in the morning.

Another reason is that I have heard of power supplies going bad and trying to catch themselves (and anything nearby) on fire. Again, not something I want to have happen at 2:00 AM when I'm asleep dreaming about creating my next greeting card.

Finally, anyone who uses Windows knows that it should be re-booted on a daily basis. This re-starting clears the memory chip and allows the computer to start new with a clean slate. So, by shutting it off at night and turning it back on in the morning, I automatically get my re-boot (that's not to say I don't have to do the occasional re-boot during the day when my computer locks up).

So, my advice is to run it when you need it, and when you're done for the day, shut it down.

Exploring File Thumbnails

Do you have folders full of pictures? I do, both from my digital camera and various scans I've done. Figuring out which one of these pictures is which is like finding something lost in my son's room - it's frightening.

Fortunately, there is another way to view these files. It's called the "thumbnail view".

From Windows Explorer or My Computer, click the **View** menu, **Thumbnails**, and you'll get a handy little thumbnail of each picture in the folder.

Makes finding that shot of Aunt Edna in her swimsuit a snap.

What if this doesn't work?

If you don't have an option for **Thumbnail View** on your **View** menu, there's still hope. As long as you have Internet Explorer 5.0 or better installed, you can make it work - in a round about way.

Right-click the folder you want to enable Thumbnail view for and select **Properties** from the resulting menu. You should see a check box towards the bottom of the screen that says "**Enable Thumbnail View**". Click it and hit OK.

Alright, now open the folder and hit the **View** menu, **Thumbnails** (just like above). With any luck, your digital aerobics will pay off and you'll see little thumbnail pictures all over your screen.

☐ Here are a few web sites that you might want to visit, some are informational and others just fun:

(Just click on the address link at the end of the description or type the address into your internet address bar)

A very well documented site on the existence (or lack there of ?) of Loch Ness monster.

Have you ever wondered if Nessie really exists? I was intrigued by this site and wandered around it for the better part of an hour. The site includes a list of sightings by date, pictures, and links to other Loch Ness Monster sites.

Some of the photographs are really unbelievable: one looks like a rock, another the part of a ship or a smiling serpent-creature- not my idea of the Loch Ness monster at all. The site does have a lot of interesting facts, so decide for yourself - Is the Loch Ness monster fact or fiction?

<http://www.nessie.co.uk/>

What time is it there? Sunrise - Sunset times.....

Curious as to what time it officially is in your time zone? Or maybe the time in California or Washington? Well here you can find out what time it is according to the Department of the Navy which serves as the official time

keeper for the United States. Lots of time links, including sun rise/ sunset and many more.

<http://tycho.usno.navy.mil/time.html>

Reference web sites:

If you need to look something up, this is the site for you. They have hundreds of reference links and cover just about every type of reference material you could ever want. This is a must have bookmark.

<http://www.libraryspot.com/>

Search for News:

Here is a cool site that is basically a search engine for news-related sites. Click on a category or enter a search term and it delivers links to all the most relevant news sites. Whether you're looking for a specific story or just wanting to keep on top of things, this site is a must see.

<http://www.totalnews.com/>

Send a part of yourself to Mars:

Ever wanted to go into outer space? Now part of you can with NASA's Mars Exploration Rover 2003 mission. All you do is click the sign me up link and give them your name. Your name will be sent to Mars with the 2003 mission. And best of all it's free!

<http://spacekids.hq.nasa.gov/2003/home.htm>

Astronomy Picture of the day:

Every day see a different part of the cosmos. See an image or photograph of the universe, with an explanation given by an astronomer. Beautiful photographs with interesting explanations. Check it out.

<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>

Space Weather:

Find all kinds of information about space and the weather. Curious as to how the Aurora Borealis shows up in our sky? Did you know that the comet Linear is heading for the sun? See pictures of the Leonid meteor storm from August over Australia. All this and more at Space Weather.

<http://www.spaceweather.com/>

Wildlife Gardening:

Ah...it's Spring.... Time to start planning your garden.

Would you like to attract birds or butterflies to your garden? Or would you like to turn your garden into a wildlife habitat? Just think of the countless hours you can spend watching squirrels, chipmunks and other animals romp through your garden.

Maybe you'd like a natural bug zapper? So that means you need a garden that attracts bats. That's right they're natural bug zappers, and much safer than those annoying electric zappers. Well, if you're curious and love wildlife, here's the site for you. It has tons of articles on how to do all of the above and much more.

<http://wildlifegardening.com/>

For those of you who like to use keyboard shortcuts:

Here are some Keyboard Shortcuts For Microsoft Internet Explorer:

All can help you navigate quickly in Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Alt + Left Arrow - Back to the previous page.

Alt + Right Arrow - Forward to the next page.

Ctrl + D - Adds the current Web page to Favorites.

Ctrl + N - Opens a new browser window.

F5 - Reloads the current page.

Ctrl + W - Closes the active IE window.

Are you a Sherlock Holmes fan? Do you enjoy a good whodunit?

Well this is the place on the web to find anything and everything you ever wanted to know about Sherlock Holmes. There are pictures, sounds, games, and so much more.

Was Sir Author Conan Doyle a murderer? Find out by checking out the Sir Author Conan Doyle section. Take a gander at the FAQ or learn about the time period that Doyle wrote in. A fabulous site, with hours of information. Enjoy!

<http://www.sherlockian.net/>

Here are some "basic" tips for Internet Explorer users:

You certainly know how to save a site as a "favorite" so you can re-visit it without having to type its name in (click on Favorites, Add to Favorites). But did you know that a quick way to move a favorite in the list is to just "drag and drop" it to a new location? And to delete a favorite from the list, just right-click on it and choose "delete." And one more tip: to sort your complete favorites list, just right-click on any entry, and choose "Sort by Name!"

Free sound clips:

A consortium of sound clips awaits you. Well you want to change the sound events on your computer? Personalize them to suit you? You may be able to find just what you are looking for here at Free Audio Clips. In fact this site even has a search engine to help you wade through the thousands of sound clips they provide, and best of all it's free.

<http://www.freeaudioclips.com/list.php?subcatid=41&subcat=System+Events&cat=10>

Well, Those are my tips and suggestions for this time. Thanks for letting me help you with your computer needs and I hope this little newsletter gives you some ideas that can make using your computer easier and more enjoyable too.

Thanks again:

Jules Porchey

"The Computer Man"

941-927-1428

e-mail at: thecomputerman8@yahoo.com

Alternate e-mail: julesp@gte.net

P.S. I would like to ask for your assistance in getting referrals. Perhaps you already know of someone who could benefit from my services? I would be pleased and grateful if you would give them my number.

Learn how to use your computer to do the tasks that you want to do. Call Jules Porchey "The Computer Man" at 927-1428