

HORIZON NEWSLETTER

Informing Businesses Using Computers

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Gates vs the Good Guys

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From the mouth of...

At the Windows 2000 release party, **Bill Gates** provided statistics on the "**mean-time between crashes**" for different versions of Windows.
Direct from Gate's mouth...

- ✓ **Windows 95 - 2 days**
- ✓ **Windows NT - 7 days**
- ✓ **Windows 2000 - 90 days**

Now, this sounds fairly good for Windows 2000, which is unproven. But it does raise the question of how in the past Microsoft could so highly praise Windows NT and 95 as being reliable operating systems. It certainly does present doubt as to why anyone should switch to 2000. We all listened and believed (*or maybe hoped*) what Microsoft originally said about Windows 95. With the introduction of NT 4.0, many people in the computer community tried and wanted to believe in Microsoft's press releases. In my opinion, history, experience and the above statistics provided by Gates, prove Microsoft mislead

computer users.

Unfortunately most of us don't have a choice, at least not yet. (*Linux desktop's may be practical in the near future.*) Without question, Windows has brought many convenient capabilities to the table and made computing easier. This deserves praise.

But what is not right is the concept that Microsoft keeps pushing, "Buy next year's model, it will fix everything." It seems to me that the concept should be, "We will fix what we promised you." There never will be a perfect operating system or software application without any bugs, but to have a two day average crash time is not acceptable. *Maybe a "Lemon Law" needs to be passed for software.*

Government Worker

A government employee sits in his office and decides to see what's in his old filing cabinet. Poking through the contents he comes across an old brass lamp. While polishing the lamp, a genie appears and grants him three wishes.

"I wish for an ice cold diet Pepsi right now!" He gets his Pepsi and drinks it.

Now that he can think more clearly, he states his second wish: "I wish to be on an island where beautiful nymphomaniacs reside." Suddenly he is on an island with gorgeous females eyeing him lustfully.

He tells the genie his third and last wish: "I wish never to have to work ever again." POOF! He's back in his government office.

Font Sizes in Word

Have you ever wanted to adjust the size of some text? For instance, suppose you create a heading and decide it needs to be just a tiny bit larger.

You can make the change by highlighting the text and selecting the desired point size from the Font Size dropdown list on the Formatting toolbar.

However, a **quicker way** is to

simply...

- ✓ highlight the text
- ✓ hold down the Ctrl key
- ✓ and press the "]" key

Each time you press the "]" key, Word will enlarge the text by one point.

To make the text smaller...

- ✓ highlight the text
- ✓ hold down the Ctrl key
- ✓ and press the "[" key

Short Books

Here is a suggested reading list for people that are short of time.

- ✓ *The Engineer's Guide to Fashion*
- ✓ *Human Rights Advancements in China*
- ✓ *America's Most Popular Lawyers*
- ✓ *Career Opportunities for Liberal Arts Majors*
- ✓ *Different Ways to Spell Bob*
- ✓ *Everything Men Know about Women*
- ✓ *Everything Women Know about Men*
- ✓ *French Hospitality*
- ✓ *George Foreman's Big Book of Baby Names*

SuSE Most Popular

In a survey at the end of 1999 by **International Data Corp.**, **SuSE was discovered to be the most popular international version of Linux.** Here are the ratings.

SuSE	19.2%
RedHat	15.6%
TurboLinux	9.2%

Corel	4.7%
Caldera	4.1%
All Others	47.2%

In the USA, RedHat seems to be the version most people are aware of. After trying and testing the different versions, we picked SuSE as our favorite and recommended version. The kernel of Linux versions are the same. What mainly varies are configuration utilities.

We liked SuSE because of the easy to use configuration and set-up tool called "yast", the fact that it does not require a GUI interface, consistency, support and security.

PARC

The popular topic today seems to be to pick on Gates and Microsoft. To get off this topic and on to something positive, I thought it may be appropriate to recognize people who have highly contributed to the computer industry and enabled all of us to work more efficiently.

There have been many people who have greatly contributed to this industry and whose names are not household words. *Too bad, they should be.* It seems bad news spreads faster than good news. So to help buck the trend, here are a few of those names that we should give thanks to.

Most of us, and especially the newer generations, take for granted laser

printing, the PC, WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get), the mouse and networking. Where did these come from?

Back in 1970, Xerox had the forethought to bring together a group of talented people for the sole purpose of research. The research center was called **Palo Alto Research Center** and commonly referred to as PARC. When the group was started no one had any idea what they were going to create other than to design for the future. Part of this research was funded by the federal agency Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) who interesting enough was also the organization that laid the grounds for what we now call the Internet. *No, Al Gore did not create it!*

Within one year, this group produced prototypes of a laser printer, a computer called the Xerox Alto that used a mouse and displayed graphic images and text in a WYSIWYG manner. Multiple computers were networked together using another developed product, Ethernet. This accomplishment, at least to me, is amazing. So who were the individuals responsible for these creations?

Gary Starkweather developed the laser printing capabilities. The original laser printer actually included color printing. Gary moved onto work with Microsoft.

Charles Simonyi invented the

WYSIWYG capabilities. He also moved on to Microsoft.

Bob Metcalfe was the primary engineer of Ethernet. He left PARC to start 3Com.

Charles Geshke created the printer language used to control the printing of text and images on paper. He later joined up with **John Warnock** to start the company Adobe Systems where they created PostScript. Almost every piece of printed material you view today was probably printed using Adobe typefaces and image capabilities.

So what happened to Xerox? If "Xerox owned PARC" created this technology that we now consider standard, why aren't they King of the Computer Heap? From statements made by the inventors, it seem Xerox bigwigs just didn't get it. They were more concerned about competition from Japan at the time. Even though they had the right concept and people, they missed the boat. Fortunately for all of us, the inventors did get it and took steps to bring the products to market.

And now for a test. Who invented laser printing? WYSIWYG? Ethernet? Postscript? *Don't tell me you forgot already?*

Creating Icons

Have you ever wanted to create your own custom Icons? You know those pictures that show on your desktop.

You may have thought you needed specialized software. Actually not. It can be accomplished with "**Paint**", a standard design tool provided with Windows.

Here are the required steps...

- ✓ Start Paint (usually by Start, Programs, Accessories, Paint)
- ✓ Click on Image, Attributes
- ✓ Change the values in the Width and Height fields to 32
- ✓ Units should be set to Pels (default)
- ✓ Colors should be set to Colors (default)
- ✓ Click on OK

You should now have a small box that is the typical size of an icon.

To enlarge this box so you can see what the heck you are doing...

- ✓ Click on View, Zoom, Custom
- ✓ Click on 800% and OK

Now you have an easier size to work with.

To view the actual size at the same time...

- ✓ Click on View, Zoom
- ✓ Click on Show Thumbnail
- ✓ Click and Drag the thumbnail so that you can view both the enlarged and thumbnail window at the same time.

Because the icon is actually a bunch of small colored squares, it is best to turn on the grid so you can see the squares.

- ✓ Click on View, Zoom
- ✓ Click on Show Grid

Now the fun begins. First make sure the Pencil icon is checked at the righthand side. Pick a color at the bottom and then click on one of the squares. The square will change to the selected color. At this point some artistic talent is required. Keep trying and you should be able to create a graphic image. You may want to start with just a simple square.

Once you have created the desired effect, it is time to save your creation.

- ✓ Click on File, Save
- ✓ Even though it doesn't seem to

be an option, make sure you save the image with ".ico" as the file extension. *Example: myicon.ico*

To use your custom icon in place of any of the desktop icons.

- ✓ Right hand click on a shortcut icon and select properties.
- ✓ Click on Change Icon and select your newly created icon.

Test Your UPS

These simple instructions will allow you to verify the battery power of your UPS.

Over time, UPS batteries wear out. This leads to a loss of power capacity and runtime. Testing your unit monthly will ensure that the batteries are still providing the required runtime for your system.

Depending upon the model of UPS you own, you may either perform a manual test on your unit or use APC's PowerChute(R) plus software to monitor and log the results of the automatic battery test.

To perform a manual test you simply press the test button located on the UPS. After testing, if you find that the battery indicator has turned red, then you may need to replace your batteries or upgrade your UPS.

The new APC systems have user-replaceable batteries which can be changed with no system downtime! If your UPS has neither a self-test button nor PowerChute, you have a very old model. It's probably time to upgrade your UPS.