

HORIZON NEWSLETTER

Informing Businesses Using Computers

January - April 2002

Save Time With These Applications

Inside this Issue

Faxing with Linux	1
Old Methods	1
New Method	2
Added Benefits	2
Receiving Faxes	2
Save Time and Money	2
Putting a PDA to Work	2
Word's Summarize	3
Properties Summary	3
How to Create	4
How to View	4
How to Use	4

Published by
roger Petersen of



Elmhurst, IL 60126
630-941-9332
Fax: 630-941-9338
Email: Roger@AHInc.com
Visit our web site at
www.AHInc.com

All Material is Copyrighted
Annual Subscription \$12

Faxing with Linux

One of the often overlooked areas is the ability to fax directly from your computer. We still see customers who will print a document and then spend time taking it to a standard fax machine. Sometimes waiting for the fax to become available and almost always waiting for the fax to be sent. Very time consuming.

We have some customers who have a modem installed in their PC that is hooked up to a dedicated phone line. This does allow them to fax directly from their PC, but other office users either have the same set-up, using yet another phone line, or can't fax directly at all.

Old Methods

In the past, for some customers, we have set-up a dedicated PC as a Windows fax server using Microsoft's Fax at Work product. The fax PC would be shared so that all other uses could access and send faxes from their computer to the Windows fax server. This technique required only one modem and one phone line. This method was an inexpensive solution because almost any old PC could be used for the fax server and the software was provided

with Windows 95. The problem that has developed is that Microsoft discontinued including the fax software starting with Windows 98.

A more expensive solution that we have set-up for some customers was to purchase an AIX/Unix-based fax software product, such as Vsi-Fax. A modem and fax server software would be installed on the AIX/Unix system using only one phone line and fax client software would be installed on each client to access the fax server software. This solution allowed users to fax directly from their Windows applications, such as Word, and also send faxes from applications running on the AIX/Unix server.

The extra expense involved in this solution was the cost of the fax software for both the server and client. A downside to this solution was the difficulty in creating cover pages. It required creating a special formatted file on the AIX/Unix server. The creation of a new or change to an existing cover page usually required our services to create.

New Method

We now recommend using a Linux server running the fax server software product Hylafax along with a Windows fax client software. There are two different fax client packages we have found that work, Cypheus and WHFC. **The good news is that these products are available at no cost.** The Hylafax product has been available for sometime, but we just recently found the needed Windows-based Cypheus and WHFC software. Cypheus will not run on Windows95, but WHFC does.

Because most of our customers already have Linux servers, all of the equipment that is needed is already in place. The only thing needed is for us to set-up and configure the software and a modem.

Added Benefits

One added benefit of the Cypheus software is that it **provides a utility tool for users to create their own cover pages.** The tool operates like a Windows word processor. WHFC also accommodates cover pages by editing a postscript based text file.

Another added benefit is the ability to **create shared phone books** containing names and fax numbers. Both Cypheus and WHFC have their own built-in phone book plus the ability to automatically access other databases containing this information. In other words, multiple phone books.

We have created a special Access database that we provide free, that allows you to . . .

- Import names and phone numbers from almost any database
- Manually create other entries
- Maintain all entries

The databases can then be shared by all users. If needed, you can also have a private database of entries. In addition you have the ability to manually enter a one-time fax number on-the-fly during the fax sending process.

Both utilities display and update the status of all sent faxes. There is also an option to have an Email message with status information sent to the sender.

Because the sending process operates just like a print spooler, you never have to wait to send faxes. You can send faxes, even if the server is in the middle of sending other faxes. The faxes go into a queue and are sequentially sent.

Receiving Faxes

This solution will also allow you to receive faxes, but we still recommend using a standalone fax machine for receiving. The main reason is that you don't want customers getting busy signals when sending their faxes. This requires having two separate phone lines, one for sending and one for receiving.

Save Time and Money

So, if you or other employees are still printing a document and then manually faxing, make your operation more efficient by having us install Hylafax and Cypheus or WHFC.

For more information, you can access the Cypheus site at <http://www.cypheus.de/cypheus/index.html>, Hylafax at <http://www.hylafax.org/> and WHFC at <http://www.transcom.de/whfc/>

Putting a PDA to Work

We were probably late in using handheld PDA devices, such as the Palm Pilot or Handspring models. But we are now finding an almost unlimited use for these handy, small and easy-to-use devices.

What has opened the door is a software product called ThinkDB that can easily create custom applications. In a nutshell this product

- Allows us to **quickly develop custom forms** and databases
- Allows the user to **easily enter or maintain data**
- Automatically **synchronize** with an Access database
- Allows **non-PDA users to access and maintain the same data**

There are more than 300,000 PDA users who are already using ThinkDB. According to the ThinkDB people, the three most popular uses are . . .

- Collecting important data in the field in a structured way
- Broadcasting data to mobile teams
- Synchronizing corporate data with a mobile workforce

An example of a simple application is to retain customer and contact information. The Palm OS already provides a program to store contact information and associated company information, but it is limited in its capability. By creating a custom database you can define special fields to help define and classify your customers.

Depending on your needs, you could track

- All past purchased products
- YTD Sales
- Last Year Sales
- Current orders
- Basically any data that helps your sales force.

Another example would be to retain information on your product line such as technical notes, specifications, related products, etc. This data could also be provided to your customers for their convenience.

It could be used for performing physical inventory counting.

The use of this technology could eliminate those wasteful forms, such as expense reports, time cards, project reporting, surveys, procurement forms, research

reports, and sales tracking.

Your data resides in one easy-to-use, always connected, handheld program. Whether you are away from the office or need a quick update, ThinkDB keeps you in control and up-to-date by using dbSync. Information from your handheld is automatically updated to and from your corporate data.

For our own use, we are in the final stages of creating a project and time capture system. **Ask our technicians to give you a demo of how easy it is to use.**

Word's Summarize

Managing multiple documents can be frustrating when you can't remember what each document is about. **Two features that can make you job easier are the AutoSummarize feature and Properties Summary.** The AutoSummarize feature **automatically summarizes the key points** in a document. Word analyzes your document, determines the most important sentences, and gives you a custom summary based on this analysis.

To open the AutoSummarize dialog box

- Choose **Tools/AutoSummarize**
- Select **one of the four** summary options to
 - Highlight the key points
 - Insert a summary at the top of the document

- Create a new document and paste the summary there
- Hide everything but the summary without leaving the document.

You can also customize the length of the summary and update the document statistics so you can access the summary through File/Properties.

Properties Summary

One good habit you can develop is entering information in the Summary Properties for each document. Doing so enables you to quickly locate even the most elusive document by telling Word to search for files that match a particular keyword.

Among the most useful bits of summary information are keywords, since they can give you a good idea of a document's contents as well as facilitating the search process. However, the prospect of having to think of appropriate keywords for each document may be less than appealing, especially if you're in a hurry. Fortunately, you can let Word come up with the keywords and automatically enter them in the Properties dialog box for you.

All you have to do is run AutoSummarize on a document to create and insert keywords and comments in the summary properties. *Note: Word will replace any entries that may already appear in those text boxes.*

How to Create

- Choose **Tools/AutoSummarize**
- Select **Highlight Key Points**
- Check the **Update Document Statistics box**
- Select **OK**

Word will highlight your document's key points and display the AutoSummarize toolbar.

Click **Close** to dismiss the toolbar and the highlighting will disappear with the results being placed in the Properties Summary.

How to View

To view or change the results

- Click on **File**

- Click on **Properties**
- Click on the **Summary tab**

You are now viewing the keywords and comments that were just automatically created. You can add, change or delete the contents. *Keep in mind that if you rerun the above AutoSummarize step again, it will replace your changes.*

How to Use

Let's assume that three months later you want to find all documents that have the keyword Job123. To do so

- Click on **File**
- Click on **Open**
- Click on the **Advanced button**.

(Odds are fairly good that you have never used this button)

- In the properties field, **change filenames to keywords**.
- In the **value field** enter Job123
- Click on **Find Now**

You will be returned to the standard open window and only filenames that have a keyword of Job123 will be displayed.

Another option is to **right-hand click on a filename** in the Open window and click on **properties**. This will open the Properties summarize and allow you to view the keywords or comments. You can also change the keywords or comments at this point without having to open the document.



323 Ferndale Ave, Elmhurst, IL 60126