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ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP



HOT KEY

Summer Edition 2005



"The St. Helens contingent of IWPCUG. Peter Lovely (left), Mike Shepherd (right)

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The Isle of Wight PC User Group

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Unless stated otherwise, meetings are held at the Riverside Centre in Newport, starting at 7.30 pm.
Some of the following events are provisional. Keep a watch here for updates.

Date	Subject	Presenter
6 July	Introduction to Microsoft Word	Tina Hart
3 August	Barbecue at Bembridge	Bob and David Groom
7 September	Introduction to databases	Tim Carter
Suggestions for new events, speakers or topics are always welcome. Please contact any Committee member or the Editor with your ideas. If necessary we may be able to find a speaker to match your subject.		

The Isle of Wight P C User Group

Welcomes all owners and users of IBM Compatible Personal Computers. It is a group which seeks to exchange ideas and new information. Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month at **The Riverside Centre, Newport.**
At 7.30 - 9.30 pm.

Membership is £6 per annum
Visitors are welcome.

A charge of £1 is made per meeting which includes tea or coffee during the break.

If you would like to know more about us, either come along to one of our meetings or contact one of our Committee Members listed on page 3.

Club's Website:-
<http://www.iwpcug.org/>

* We also have an e-group discussion area :- *
* Yahoo iwpcusers: iwpcusers@yahoo.co.uk *
* See page 5 for how to join *



Honorary President:

Sie Norman Echlin

Chairman: David Groom

Vice-Chairman: Cliff Maidment

Treasurer: Bob Groom

Secretary: Andy King

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Committee Member: Robert Wilcock

Committee Member: Roger Skidmore

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Editorial

In 1947 as a young policeman in Palestine I was faced with learning two new languages, Arabic and Hebrew. Later in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) I had to learn three more, Chinyanja, Chbemba and Silozi and brush up my French for use in the Belgian Congo. I attained only a modicum of success in any of these, and for the most part only smatterings remain. You only remember what you use! Yet, there are well over 1000 languages in use round the world (see www.ethnologue.com) and people who can speak more than 20 of them are very rare. Yet, with the right technological prompting the computer can manage them all, and remember them all! All this using just 0,1 and 2. All nature is coded with just four bases, adenine, cytosine, thymine and guanine (DNA) and uracil for RNA. As you have to think in a language before you can properly speak it the computer needs input. but it is certain that complexity is built from simplicity.

Why all this? Well, by way of introduction. I infinitely prefer the simple. I edited "Kotkey" from December 1995 to December 1997; an edition every month and no coloured pages then! Always the difficulty was to find enough and sufficiently varied material to compile a newsworthy, interesting and readable journal. Although I have had more than enough to fill this edition, I fear the problem may yet arise. Though not entirely, illness largely constrains me to home and my computer. I must my computer! I propose to e-mail or write to three or four members each quarter and ask for them to write, find, and discover suitable material, preferably from their own experience but otherwise from friends, the web or magazines. These "Kotkey Reporters" can then send their material to me at peter@jem-k.com or by post and I will edit it together with the Committee's requirements for the next edition. I will change the "reporters" every quarter so no one will be asked more than once (unless they wish otherwise) and will have ten weeks or so to conjure something up. In this way, in time the whole Club becomes involved and different perspectives should emerge. Of course, if any member does not want or feel able to assist they have only to let me know.

In conclusion I would like to acknowledge the past Editors of "Kotkey" who have so greatly improved the magazine since I last left it.

N. Peter Lovely.

E-MAIL DISCUSSION GROUP

A question from John Bownas was asked in the Group on Sunday, May 8th. The question referred to Virgin Broadband.

"What happens on a 'normal' broad-band connection if the limit is reached half way through a month? Are you then left with absolutely no service for two weeks or is there a surcharge for excess use?"

The Chairman, David Groom answered:-

"John, this is taken from the Wanadoo web site:"

"You may use your Broadband connection freely up to these usage allowances.

Your service will not be affected should you exceed your monthly allowance.

However, we may contact you and request that you either reduce your usage or upgrade to the next usage band. If you continually exceed your monthly allowance your service could be suspended."

An interesting inter-communication has been taking place on the subject of "Blue Screen".

No resolution has yet been discovered on the matter but if there is anything resulting David Broughton will comment as appropriate.

Thanks are due to the Chairman for his reminders with regards to meetings and Committee matters.

HOW TO JOIN THE E-GROUP

Send an e-mail to: **iwpusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**

All members are encouraged to join this e-group (which costs nothing and is private to all club members) in order to keep in touch with events and join in discussions. You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.iwpcug.org**

It is particularly desirable that you should keep up with the latest details of meetings

EXPERIENCES IN MOVING THE WINDOWS ADDRESS BOOK

Having bought a laptop computer running Windows XP Home Edition, I wanted to transfer my Windows address book to it from my main computer running Windows 98SE.

My first thought was the obvious one of using the Export and Import features of the Windows address book. The Export item appears under the File menu of the Address Book and when you click on this you have a choice of formats. I chose the obvious one of Windows Address Book (WAB).

On importing on the laptop I discovered to my horror that all my email contacts were in the same category -- none of my folders had been preserved. Sorting everyone into their specific folders was not a job I looked forward to so I decided to try a different method. Why not copy the WAB file directly? It might not be in a compatible format but I would take that risk.

The idea was easier to think up than to do! Where is the WAB file? Buried deeply down a long path that is different in Win98 than in WinXP. The path in Win98 was found to be `\WINDOWS\Application Data\Microsoft\Address Book\` and the file name was `David Broughton.wab`.

In WinXP the path was longer, beginning with `\Documents and Settings\David\` in place of `\WINDOWS\` and the file name was `David.wab`.

Navigating using Windows Explorer was not easy because some of the directories are Hidden or System. For example, in XP, the directory "Microsoft" is System and "Application Data" is Hidden. I had to use the DOS command prompt to navigate to the required directory. I suppose an experienced Windows user might be able to navigate through the maze with its obstacles as I did using DOS.

The result was worth the effort, however, because after copying the WAB file from my main computer to the correct directory on the laptop and renaming it to correspond with its original name, I got back all the address folders with everyone in their correct folder as they were on the Win98 computer. So it appears that the WAB files for Win98 and XP are compatible.

But it took some considerable effort. I wonder what is the official, proper, way to transfer the address book? I suspect there must exist a much easier method. Comments are invited.

David Broughton (still fighting Windows)

Cynical?.....perhaps!

The original story of the ant and the grasshopper

“Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.” (Proverbs Ch.6)

The Ants work hard in the desiccating heat all summer long, building their houses and laying up supplies for the winter.

The Grasshoppers think the Ants are fools, and laugh and dance and play the summer away.

Come winter, the Ants are warm and well fed. The shivering Grasshoppers have neither food nor shelter so they die in the cold.

A modern British version.

The Ants work hard in the desiccating heat all summer long, building their houses and laying up supplies for the winter.

The Grasshoppers think the Ants are fools, and laugh and dance and play the summer away. *

Come winter, the Ants are warm and well fed.

The shivering Grasshoppers call a press conference and demand to know why the Ants should be allowed to be warm and well fed whilst others, less fortunate like themselves are cold and starving.

The media news channels arrive and provide live coverage of the shivering Grasshoppers, with cuts to a video of the Ants in their comfortable warm home and with tables filled with food.

Britons are stunned that in a country of such wealth these poor Grasshoppers are allowed to suffer whilst others have plenty. Liberal minded citizens demonstrate in front of the Ants' house.

One of the TV channels interrupt a Travellers' cultural festival 'special' with breaking news broadcasts of the holding of hands and the singing of “We shall overcome!”

A previous Home Secretary expostulates in a Sunday morning interview that the Ant has become rich off the backs of the Grasshopper and calls for an immediate tax increase so that the Ants “should pay their fair contribution to Society”.

The Government drafts the “Economic Equity and Grasshopper Anti-Discrimination Act”, retrospective to the beginning of the summer. It is rushed through parliament.

The Ants' taxes are re-assessed and Ants are fined for failing to hire Grasshoppers as workers.

Short of money to pay both the fines and the newly imposed retrospective

taxes the Ants' home is confiscated by the Council. The Ants move to India and start a successful call centre.

The TV stations later show the now fat Grasshoppers finishing up the last of the Ants' food even though Spring is still months away. The Council housing they were provided with (that vacated by the Ants) crumbles in decay from lack of maintenance. Lack of Government funding is blamed for this and a commission of inquiry set up that will cost several millions of pounds.

The Grasshoppers are soon all dead. Drug overdose is suspected. A Daily paper blames it on an obvious failure of a succession of Governments to address the root causes of despair arising from social inequality.

The abandoned housing is taken over by a gang of venomous overseas spiders, praised by the liberal minded for enriching Britain's multicultural diversity.

Terror arises in Britain.

Spring edition of HOT KEY magazine.

I would like to thank the member who informed me that they had had to pay excess postage charges for the delivery of the above magazine and cover disk. The additional inserts and the fact that the cover disk was contained in a plastic pocket instead of the usual paper one may have taken the weight slightly over.

I would like to apologise if anyone else has had to pay excess and I will have the weight checked before dispatch in future.

Ray Boote

There is no such thing as a special offer if the goods don't fit your needs!

I recently answered an advertisement for a 4-way USB2 hub which was advertised as being on special offer from Serif. I needed to upgrade from my USB generic hubs as my motherboard supported USB2. At £5.95 this seemed a good buy so I agreed to purchase two. I intended to daisy chain in the same way as with my USB1 Hubs.. I omitted to check whether or not they were self powered (or depended on the computer for their power supply) and as I frequently do, assumed that postage was proportional. When it arrived the delivery cost was £4, the second one was priced at ££9.95 as only one was on special offer, they had no power leads and the screened USB leads were just 20cm long, too short for my requirements. I really can have no complaint. At those prices their offer was genuine. I just hadn't sufficiently checked that the goods were exactly what I wanted! Does this ring a bell with anyone?

Ed.

What is RAID? A summary by D. Groom

RAID (Redundant Array of Independent (inexpensive) Disks) is a way of storing the same data in different places using two or more hard drives in combination to give better fault tolerance and performance.

This used to be something only seen on high performance servers, and therefore not something the average member of this club may have been aware of. However a number of new PC motherboards now support this feature, and so we are likely to come across the term RAID more often.

A RAID is a collection of disk drives that collectively act as a single storage system. In other words, two or more hard disk drives which are grouped together and appear as a single disk drive. Or, in practice, it can also be two or more disk partitions grouped together and appear as a single partition/logical drive

The concept of RAID dates back to a paper written in 1988 (see note 1 below). The basic premise of this was, that as the speed of processors increased, the “bottleneck” in computer performance was likely to come from the speed at which data could be written to / from a hard disk. As there were physical limitations as to how fast a hard disk could be accessed, then the solution was to break the data down into blocks, with each block being written to a separate disk drive, so that the amount of “work” each hard disk needed to do was reduced. The paper thought that arrays of possibly hundreds or thousands of disks could be used.

However increasing the number of disks in the array has one downside, that of reliability. At that time a hard disk had a MTTF (mean time to failure) of 30,000 hours. If you had an array of 100 disks then you could expect one disk to fail every 300 hours, and with an array of 1000 disks, you would have to expect a failure every 30 hours. Accordingly, without some form of inbuilt fault tolerance,

large arrays of disks become too unreliable to be of any use. The solution is to make use of extra disks containing redundant (or duplicated) information to allow recovery of the original information when a disk fails. And hence the acronym Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks.

There are a number of different types of RAID, called RAID levels, plus a non-redundant array (RAID-0), some of which are detailed below:

RAID-0. This technique has striping, whereby the data is broken down into blocks and each block is written to a separate disk drive, but no redundancy of data. It offers the best performance, since data is simultaneously being written to more than one disk, but no fault-tolerance. In fact you will have worse fault tolerance than if you just use disks without RAID. Unlike normal crashes, you will not be able to extract any data from the hard disks in the array even though only one of the disks failed. This is because every file had been striped across two or more disks. Therefore, when even one of the disk fails, chunks from every file will disappear and all affected files will be unusable.

RAID-1. This type is also known as disk mirroring and consists of at least two drives that duplicate the storage of data. There is no striping. If one disk fails, its partner keeps right on running, without interruption. The good news with RAID-1 is that it's very easy to manage and it does not require significant levels of CPU time for normal operations or for recovery. Read performance is improved since either disk can be read at the same time. Write performance is slower than for single disk storage as the data has to be written twice. The downside to RAID-1 is the expense, since it requires twice as much disk space as unprotected disks.

RAID-0+1. This is a combination of RAID-0 and RAID-1. Using this combination, users will be able to enjoy both the benefits of RAID-0 and RAID-1. In this setup, you basically striped two or

What is RAID (continues from page 11)

more disks and use a similar number of disks to mirror the striped data disks. Therefore, the number of hard disks required for this setup would be twice the number of disks used for striping. This is quite an expensive proposition and thus is not normally a viable solution. In addition, although the reading performance of a RAID-0+1 is significantly improved, it still suffers quite badly during writes. This is because it still inherits RAID-1's requirement to write every piece data twice!

RAID-3, RAID-4, and RAID-5 are all variations on a theme. The theme is parity-based RAID. Instead of keeping a full copy of the data as in RAID-1, these levels spread the data over several disks with an additional disk added. The data on the additional disk is calculated (using Boolean XORs) based on the data on the other disks. If any disk in the set is lost, its data can be recovered through calculations on the data on the remaining disks.

As far as members of the club are concerned it is only RAID-0, RAID-1, and RAID-0+1 which we are likely to find on motherboards intended for the home/small business user. Other levels of RAID are likely to be supported only by dedicated controllers not incorporated into the motherboard.

Note 1

A working link to this paper can be found at <http://xjs.org/25c> , a better copy of the document can be found at <http://xjs.org/25d> but although this opens OK in Internet Explorer, other browsers don't always open it and so you will need to save the file to your hard drive and then open it in Acrobat Reader.

Note 2

Other resources on the web include:

http://www.acnc.com/04_00.html

http://www.adriansrojakpot.com/Speed_Demonz/IDE_RAID/RAID_02.htm

SOLUTION TO THE MAY PUZZLE

Which three whole numbers, when added together, give the same total as when they are multiplied together?

I should have specified that they should be positive integers because Michael Hodge pointed out that n , $-n$, 0 would work for any integer value of n and John Stafford pointed out that

$-1, -2, -3$ is also an answer if negative numbers are allowed.

The answer expected was $1, 2, 3$ which was the answer received from Michael Hodge, John Stafford, Roger Skidmore, Jane Willis, Rosemary West, Liam Thom, John Bownas and Jerry Tepper. Michael Hodge won the draw and the £5 book token. John Stafford won the prize the previous month (April) and so was excluded this month.

Rosemary West said not to include her in the draw and Jane Willis is not a member so there were only five persons in the draw. Well done all of you. Non members are welcome to send me answers and are invited to join the club.

This puzzle was very easy to see how many members would have a go. They are not always as easy as that but keeping the brain exercised is good for you! If you know any good ones that I haven't used yet, I will be pleased to hear them.

Thanks to Clem Robertson for many new ideas from some magazines he has given me. The puzzle for June was one of them.

Note that my monthly puzzle appears on the club website every month (go to www.iwpcug.org/davidbro) and usually you will find next month's puzzle there before the end of the previous month.

David Broughton
davidb67@clara.co.uk

The July puzzle is on Page 14 overleaf. Please note that whereas *Hotkey* is only published every three months, David Provides a puzzle (and a prize is awarded) each month which can be found on the Club website: iwpcug.org.uk Ed.

What else are they for?

Found amongst the instructions of a widely prescribed sleeping tablet:-

"Do not take alcohol whilst taking these tablets as the sedative effect of the medication may be increased and you may feel tired and fall asleep" !

The IW PCUG July 2005 Cover Disk

features two sets of programmes – the first reflects the current activity of the club, mostly in the form of the Website which is included here, together with some archival material, and the second (mostly to use up the remaining space!) comprises the Autumn 2004 cover disk utilities library with a few enhancements and additions.

The table listing has included two columns of active links – the first is to the appropriate website which will only work if you are on line, the second is to the appropriate link on the CD itself. This could be a program setup file, a document link such as a PDF file or a link to an html website saved to disk e.g. the IWPCUG or Computability website. David's July 2005 puzzle is the first link in the table.

The early floppy disk cover disks are mostly included on the CD. Each floppy cover disk has its own directory. There is an automatically generated html page listing the contents of these floppies. Some of these links work, others don't. If you want to inspect a particular floppy cover disk you would do best to copy the contents to an actual floppy. It may still not run under XP, etc. There is a "DOS Box" MSDOS emulator included on the CD to help. This may all get a bit technical, but it's just for nostalgia and a bit of fun.

As ever – ensure you have a backup first before installing any of these programs. All programs are to be found on the CD. There are other useful programmes listed in the Xtras table which can be found on the disc.

Chairman's Report

I would, first of all, like to express my thanks to Ray Boote for his past editorship of HotKey, and to Peter for agreeing to become the current editor. Roger Skidmore also deserves thanks for his production of yet another cover disk, though sadly this will be his last. Anyone willing to take on cover disk production please contact a committee member.

I am pleased to say that over the past few months the committee have managed to find speakers and topics for our monthly meetings, but as usual the burden of this has fallen disproportionately on the same few people. Our e-group seems to have become rather quiet recently, once again I would urge those of you who have not yet signed up to do so, details are on page 5. To those of you who are already members I would say "get posting". The e-group should not only be used as a place to discuss computing issues, but also as a forum for members to express feedback on the club and its' activities.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at the BBQ next month at Bembridge Lodge.

David Groom, Chairman.

Denny's Talk on 1st June. (Shrink)

I bought a DVD player for our car so that my daughter can watch movies on long journeys. She likes Disney and a DVDs can cost £15 or more. A dozen or so movies which could be worth nearly £200, are a lot to leave in a car. Many of us now have DVD writers and blank discs that cost 25-30p, so that by using copies in the car those dozen disks will be only worth about £3-£4.

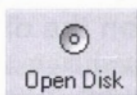
So how do you copy a DVD? ***N.B. This is not an invitation to pirate disks. Only "backup" your own DVDs for your own use. If you sell the original you must also destroy the backup.***

DVDs are encrypted for various regions, 1 for USA, 2 for Europe, etc. A manufactured DVD is typically 8.5GB. Blank DVDs are only 4.7GB. So not only do we need to decrypt the disk, we also need to either compress the movie or remove some of the extras from the disk.

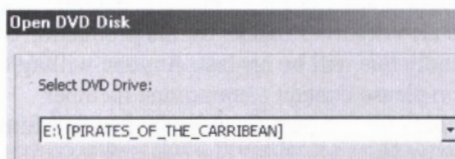
There are many programs that claim to copy DVD. Many cost up to £50; forget them. There is a simple freeware program that works with Nero (burning software) or your own DVD writing software. DVD Shrink 3.2, widely available on the Internet, is only around 1MB in size and very simple to use.

I use 2 disk drives, a DVD rom (for the original) & a DVD-RW (for the blank DVD), although you can use only the writer and swap disks when prompted.

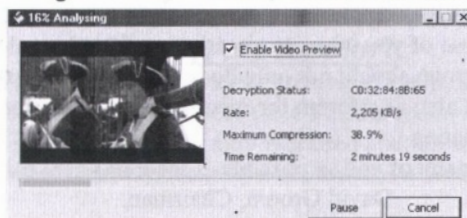
Lets start; Click the Open Disk icon and select the DVD

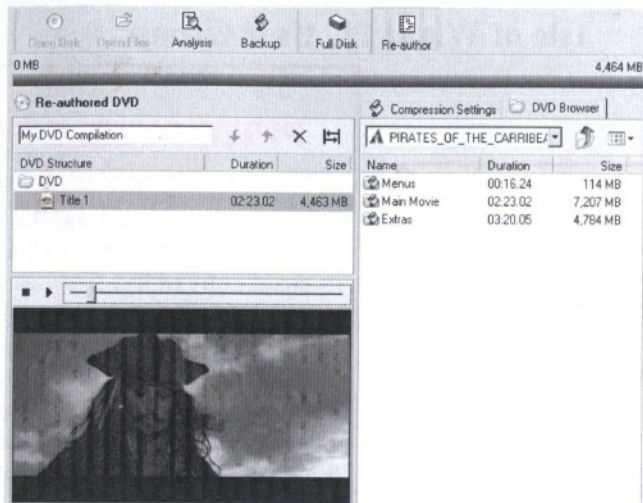


This is to analysis the DVD and may take a couple of minutes or so.



You now have a listing of all the movies, menu and extras on the DVD





Hopefully DVD Shrink will have compressed it to 4.7GB, 1 continuous green line. If a red section appears at the end this means it can't compress the files enough and you will need to delete some sections, such as foreign languages, some of the extras (after all my daughter only wants to watch the movies).

Now click the backup icon, and select a temporary directory, this is needed while the program sorts out the decrypted files. Clicking OK starts the encoding process, depending on your processor this could take 45 minutes,.



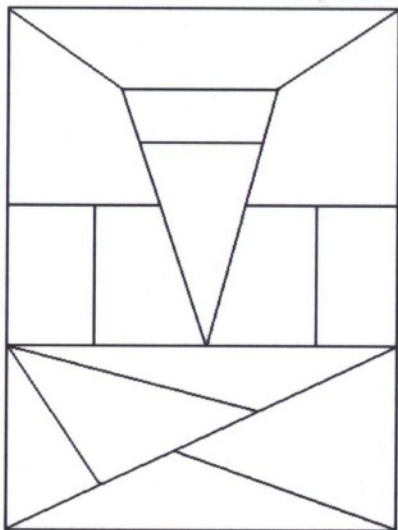
when encoding finishes, (switch disks if necessary), the burning process starts using nero, roxio or another DVD writing program.

And that's it! The finished DVD is region free so will play in any player. Because it has been compressed there must be some loss of quality although it may be difficult to notice.

Remember these disks are only for your own personal use.

If anyone needs a copy of either DVD Shrink or Nero 6, both available from many download sites, contact me at Dennis.Linzmaier@IOW.gov.uk

Isle of Wight PC User Group



PRIZE PUZZLE FOR JULY 2005 LINE CUTTING

The prize puzzle this month is to make a copy of the diagram on the left and then to draw a continuous red line through every line segment once and once only without crossing your own line. A "line segment" is a line that connects two junctions. You can start and finish anywhere.

Please send me, David Broughton, your sketch or GIF file by Wednesday 3rd August 2005 to be entered into the prize draw.

To contact me see details on page 3:

A copy of this can be found either on the disc or on the web-site.

Members Own Notice Board

A space where you can advertise goods for sale and any other notices you may wish to put in.

For Sale

Two generic powered USB hubs,
Each with 4 USB ports suitable for daisy chaining
£6 each. Contact the Editor.

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