

Issue 166

July 2009

**ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP**



HOT KEY

SUMMER 2009

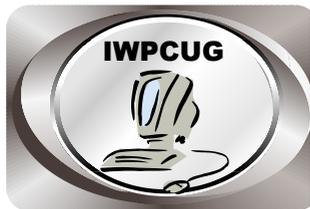


Steve Sutters was demonstrating how to
build a high-performance computer
for Audio and Visual Multi-Media

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The Isle of Wight Personal computer User Group

The Isle of Wight PC 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 held on the first Wednesday of each month at **The Riverside Centre, Newport** from 7.30 to 9.30 pm

Visitors are welcome. Membership is £6 per annum

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, you are most welcome to come along to one of our meetings, or you can contact one of our Committee Members listed on page 3.

The Club Website address is **www.iwpcug.org**

We also have an e-group discussion area

Yahoo iwpcusers: **iwpcusers@yahoogroups.com**

See page 6 for how to join

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
1 July	How I Use My Computer	Steve Sutters
5 August	Summer BBQ - 7 PM Start (see page 9)	
2 September	Windows 7	David Groom

See our Website for more information as it becomes available

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman : David Groom

Vice-Chairman : Cliff Maidment

Treasurer : Phil Rogers

Secretary : Susanne Bone

Membership & Database Secretary : Ray Boote

Committee Member : Roger Skidmore

HotKey Editor : Bob Groom

**Contact details removed prior to
publishing on internet**

Suggestions for new events, topics or speakers for talks are always welcome.

Please contact any committee member with your ideas.

If necessary we may be able to find a speaker for your subject.

Chairmans Report

The results of the survey into the continuation of HotKey and the cover disk are published below. The overwhelming majority want HotKey to continue, however the editor has repeatedly spoken of the problem in getting articles for the magazine. So the message is clear, we will endeavour to publish HotKey, but some of you need to supply some content.

We have so far managed to have a full schedule of events this year, though the program for the autumn has not been filled by this time we go to press.

In previous issues of HotKey and the coverdisk we have championed free Open Source software, this month to redress the balance we are covering Windows 7.

If you want to contact me, please note I have a new email address, see page 3.

Lastly I hope to see as many of you as possible at the BBQ next month. To help with catering it would be easier if you could let me know by 2nd August if you are planning to attend.

Hotkey Survey

With the last edition of HotKey I included a questionnaire asking for your views on HotKey and the coverdisk. Thank you to those who responded, in total I recieved 29 replies. Almost everyone had a broadband internet connection, and the ability to read Adobe pdf files.

Whilst all but one read HotKey, only half the respondents used the coverdisk.

There was overwhelming support for the production of HotKey to continue (only 4 people said they didn't mind if HotKey were discontinued). If the number of issues each year was reduced half of you would not mind, whilst the remainder felt this would not be a good idea. There was no clear consensus on the issue of whether HotKey could be produced only in a pdf version on the web site or coverdisk.

Sixty percent would like to see the coverdisk continue.

In view of the responses the commitee have decided to try and maintain the status quo. However if we can't find enough material to fill an issue then that edition will not be produced.

David Groom

Windows 7 - by David Groom

October 2009 sees the scheduled release of Windows 7, the latest version of Microsoft's operating system. Microsoft has been hyping this release, see page 13 of this issue, and the videos about Windows 7 on this month's cover disk.

I have to admit I never upgraded to Vista, and so the difference between XP and Windows 7 does seem impressive, but many of the "new" features in Windows 7 do just seem to be a progression of what's in Vista. So rather than a completely new version, maybe Windows 7 is just a bug fix of Vista. Even so, reviews so far seem to indicate it is more stable than Vista and so may encourage people to finally upgrade from XP.

The other good news is that it is less resource hungry than Vista, so users of netbooks and laptops should be happy.

Requirements

A PC with these minimum recommended specifications:

1 GHz 32-bit or 64-bit processor or higher

1 GB of system memory or more

16 GB of available disk space

Support for DirectX 9 graphics with 128 MB memory (to enable the Aero theme)

DVD-R/W Drive

Release Candidate

Windows has made a pre-release version of Windows 7 available for download for free. It is available now and until at least the end of July.

It is a 2.5 Gb download available from:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/download.aspx>

This will expire on June 1, 2010. Starting on March 1, 2010, your PC will begin shutting down every two hours. Windows will notify you two weeks before the bi-hourly shutdowns start. To avoid interruption, you'll need to install a non-expired version of Windows before March 1, 2010. You'll also need to install the programs and data that you want to use.

One Woman's Guide to Internet Freebie Sites

Feeling credit crunched? Hate sending perfectly usable items to landfill? If, like me, you answered “yes” to these questions, one of the internet “freebie” sites might be just what you are looking for.

I thought I would investigate and, possibly, snap up a bargain in the process.

There seem to be an ever-growing number of these sites, which, in theory at least, enable you to recycle your unwanted possessions or pick up someone else's shopping mistakes.

Generally, they are free to join and use and some are divided into local area groups on the basis that a free sofa in Aberdeen is not *really* a bargain for someone in Hampshire. Most will alert you by e-mail if something on your wish list comes up. A Moderator oversees adverts put on the site. You can usually keep your e-mail address private until you choose to give it to another member.

I decided I would monitor four of the better-known sites for a fortnight, with a view to finding the desk and cupboard I needed for my study, and also to donate some of the things lurking in my garden shed.

First I looked at *Snaffleup* (snaffleup.co.uk). I was attracted to this one as you can browse through the various items on offer without having to register first. There seem to be entries from all over the country, though I could not see any from the Island. Registration, when I did take the plunge, was straightforward. Snaffleup undertakes never to reveal your personal details to other members – it is up to you who you decide to give them to. Categories included Baby, DIY, Kitchen and Everything Else. The latter featured an intriguing advert for a “Scrub away your ex” novelty washcloth. Had it not been in Canterbury.....

Next I went to *Gumtree* (gumtree.com). I had thought this was a site on which Australians advertised flat-shares in Earl's Court but it turned out to have an extensive freebie section, divided into major cities. Besides the free adverts, they also offer display ones for a moderate fee. (£3.95 for three days, or two weeks for £11.90). Gumtree is clearly concerned about spam and exposing members to various scams. You can tick a box to hide your e-mail address and they offer a useful link to an organisation called Scam Watch, which gives details of the ways criminals try to scam internet users. Items on offer

ranged from a collection of used golf balls to a brand new wedding dress (no explanation given, unfortunately, though it was not obviously tear-stained). However, most were from London or environs.

My next visit was to *Ooffoo* (ooffoo.com). This is very new, having started just before Christmas. Unlike the first two, this one also offers recipes (I tried the poached cherry pavlova – mmm) and tips (some useful – unblocking sinks, others distinctly weird – collecting nail clippings to use as slug deterrent!). However, items can be for sale, rather than being offered free. Again, this site mixes adverts from all over the UK.

Finally I looked at what is probably the most widely-known of these sites – *Freecycle* (Freecycle.org). Having started in the United States, this was introduced to Britain about five years ago. There are now over 400 groups in this country and it has 1.5 million users. They claim to save 500 tons from landfill every day. The site looks engagingly amateurish – no categories, just a mixture of offers and want ads. – but it was, in fact, a little more complicated to join than the others, as you have to sign up to both your local group and Yahoo Groups. The Moderators seem a bit fierce – given to stern e-mails about correct message formatting and so on.

Anyway, I found there was a local, Isle of Wight, group with 2478 active members. This sounds a large number but I suspect that it is actually rather too few for optimum performance – there seem far more requests than offers. Some of the former were intriguing, however. Whatever had the husband been doing when he accidentally “disposed” of the food processor he was now urgently seeking to replace? I never found any of the items I was looking for, though I was – fleetingly – tempted by the oscilloscope which “worked well in 1993” but did manage to dispose of my flowerpot mountain. Someone replied almost immediately to my offer, came and removed a huge bag of pots and even sent me a nice thank you afterwards.

So – what was my conclusion? Did these sites come up (literally) with the goods? Well, no, not really. I imagine that if one lived in a large city and had no particular time constraints, it would be possible to get what one wanted. Given our geographical limitations it was harder.

On the other hand, it was great fun seeing what some people in other areas were giving away and I *did* find a free desk - in the Freebies section of our old friend the *County Press* !

Susanne Bone

ANSWER TO THE APRIL 2009 PUZZLE

The April puzzle was to find a close approximation to Pi using the ten decimal digits once and once only. The diagram below shows some of the answers.

	FORMULA	HOW CLOSE
1	3.142857096	1.26E-3
2	$(9 + 8 + 5)/7 - .0126*(.4-.3)$	4.49E-6
3	$\frac{71 \cdot 5}{904/8 + 2 \cdot 3 - 6} = \frac{355}{113}$	2.67E-7
4	$\sqrt{9.87 - \frac{5}{(2103 + 4) \cdot 6}}$	1.46E-8
5	$\sqrt{\sqrt{3^4 + \frac{19^2}{78-56}} + 0}$	-1.00E-9
6	$\sqrt{\sqrt{\sqrt{9486 + 2.531 + 0 \cdot 7}}}$	-6.65E-10
7	$2^{5 \cdot 4} - .6 - \left(\frac{.39}{7}\right) \cdot 8^{-1}$	6.60E-13

I set this question not knowing that it was not original, as I found out from the website mathworld.wolfram.com/PiApproximations.html where the problem is referred to as a "pandigit" approximation.

Some solutions in order of increasing accuracy are shown in the graphic above (using graphics enabled me to use mathematical symbols and proper mathematical layout for the web edition).

Number 1 is from Colin Row who made the mistake of assuming that pi was 22/7. If it were, my example formula above would be 100% accurate.

Number 2 is a good effort from Michael Hodge whose error was as little as 4.49E-6. I thought that someone would try to get the next closest rational approximation after 22/7 which is 355/113. Number 3 is one example of many using all ten digits.

Number 4 is from Richard Burkill who found an approximation as close as 1.46E-8. Well done.

Number 5 was found on the internet (at the url given above) which gets the approximation down to -1E-9 which is pretty good.

This problem was one of the rare occasions where the problem setter is on equal terms with the solvers so I had a go and got number 6 which is 6.65E-10 too small. The hanging '7' and zero was an embarrassment -- it would have been nice for these to be included in the main formula but I was unable to find a way. Multiplying them together and adding was an ugly way to make the answer stick to the rules.

Number 7 is incredibly accurate: one thousand times more accurate than my own number 6. This was found on the Internet and also submitted by John Stafford and acknowledged to be attributed to Richard Hess. I had to include it for the challenge of drawing the formula! (I have assumed that where there are multiple exponentiation operators the precedence is from right to left, (which is usual.)

So in conclusion I awarded the prize for April to Richard Burkill as the best of the club solvers with special mention to John Stafford who sent me a large number of interesting solutions.

David Broughton

The Annual Club BBQ on August 5th

This will be held again at Bembridge Lodge, 114 High St, Bembridge. **Starting at 7:00pm**

It would assist catering for the event if you could let me know if you are planning to come, no definite commitment needed just some idea of the numbers expected. It would be appreciated if you could either call on 873853, or email david@vectis-webdesign.com before 2 August.

HOW TO JOIN THE E-GROUP

Send a blank 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 with discussions.

You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.iwpcug.org**.

ANTI VIRUS PROBLEMS

Recently a friend had a virus on their computer, despite using one of the freely available anti-virus products.

Since the anti-virus software had not removed it I decided the best option was to get hold of a standalone anti-virus boot CD. These allow you to boot the computer straight from the CD, and bypass the Windows installation entirely. The theory being that some viruses are so embedded in the system that either they can't be removed while Windows is running, or by loading the virus early in the boot sequence they manage to hide themselves from the anti-virus software completely. By using a boot CD with the anti-virus software on it you can get round these problems.

A trawl through the internet found three free products I could use.

The first one I tried was from Antivir, this scanned through the hard disk, taking about three hours and did identify some viruses which it renamed to stop them from being run the next time windows booted. However within a day the viruses were back, leading me to believe one trojan had never been eliminated in the first place.

I next tried a boot CD from F-Secure. At first this seemed promising, after loading it said it was connecting to the internet to download the latest virus signatures, and then it started scanning. However after two hours it gave up, having not found a single virus. Although I thought the program had updated itself over the internet it reported that its database was dated 27-11-08, which was 4 months ago.

Next on the list was a boot CD From Kaspersky. Again initial impressions were favourable. There was a nice clean interface and the program seemed to be updating over the internet (a nice little graph confirming the download activity see photo on back cover). There were a few options which could be set, but I choose the recommended settings and set the thing running. 2 hrs 25 mins later it had scanned 154,000 files, found five viruses and had finished its task. Booting back into Windows everything seemed to go OK. However just to be on the safe side the next day I booted from the Kaspersky CD again, performed another update so it was as up-to-date as it could be, and then set the security scan level from "recommended" to "high", and then set the anti-virus scanner to work. Over 4 hours later it had scanned 255,000 files and found no problems. This program seemed to fix the problem, and the computer is still virus free.

The CD image for the Kaspersky rescue disc can be found at:
http://ftp.kaspersky.com/devbuilds/RescueDisk/kav_rescue_2008.iso

David Groom

PRIZE PUZZLE FOR JULY 2009

FIVE ZERO STICKERS

$$\begin{array}{r} 3974 \\ 7162 \\ 5286 \\ \hline 8441 \end{array}$$

This is supposed to be an addition sum but something is seriously wrong. To correct it you have five zero stickers that you can use to paste over five of the 16 non-zero digits to make the sum correct.

What is the corrected sum?

Send your answer to me, David Broughton (davidb67@clara.co.uk), by email before 1st August 2009 to be entered into the Prize Draw.

REAL MEN (AND WOMEN) USE DESKTOPS

I enjoyed giving the talk in May. Learning how to give a pc based presentation was new to me and took longer to figure out than preparing the talk! Thanks to Canons Zoom Browser software it was great to have maximum definition videos, still images and text at the press of one button.

I found it convenient to get most of the supplies for my pc from one source, pay one bill and have them all delivered together. My recommendation for a fast, quiet, blu ray capable and cheap to run home theatre pc would cost £430.94 (inc. VAT) all from Ebuyer would be : –

Case

Antec NSK 3480 MATX Micro Tower - With 380W EarthWatts PSU ATX12V 2.2 USB/FireWire/Audio.

Motherboard

Gigabite GA-MA78GM-SH2 motherboard (my one) or its modern equivalent. Perhaps the Gigabite GA-MA78GM-US2H. Needs to be a micro ATX type to fit in a micro ATX case for a compact PC!

Processor

AMD Athlon 64 X2 5050e 2.6GHz processor. I have the AMD Athlon 64 X2 4850e 2.5GHz processor and wished I had known about the extra 0.1 Gig. of the 5050e.

RAM

Crucial 4GB (2X2GB) DDR2 800MHz/PC2-6400 Ballistix memory. I expect 2GB of memory would be ample for everyday use though.CD Drive
LG Electronics Blu-Ray & HD-DVD-Rom Combo 16x DVDRW Black SATA drive.

Hard disc drive replacement

OCZ 30GB 2.5" SATAII 32MB Cache Vertex Series Solid State Drive. Better fasten your seatbelts with this super fast drive. You too can do a clean install of Windows XP in 25 mins!

Sound card (this one is not available from Ebuyer)

For improved sound quality and versatility of sound inputs and outputs. This one is great for stereo sound systems and musicians. ESI Juli@ 24bit 192kHz Stereo Audio/MIDI Interface Provides 24-bit/192kHz recording quality with S/PDIF digital I/O and 16 channels of MIDI. -- Digital Village & DV247.COM Southampton £99.

All prices for the above taken from the 17th May 2009.

Lastly who said the floppy disc was dead? Why not add some retro style that's useful for old programs and great for small amounts of data. Got mine for a donation to Computability.

If any one is interested I could put a system together for the cost of the parts plus £50 labour.

Stephen Sutters.

Cover Disk Contents

This months cover disk includes seven videos introducing Windows 7.

Also there are the latest versions of Firefox, Acrobat Reader, and various security software.

David Groom

So whats new in Windows 7 ?

the following details are taken from Microsoft's web site and so reflect their view

Faster, more responsive performance

Nobody likes to wait, we all want our PCs to perform well. To improve performance, Windows 7 is designed to make PCs start up, shut down, resume from standby, and respond faster.

We've also focused on making it more convenient to work with Windows. For example, the Action Center gives you more control over how the operating system notifies you about system changes. You can recover more quickly from problems when they do occur because when you're ready to address issues, Windows 7 will help you fix them.

Improved taskbar and full-screen previews

The taskbar at the bottom of your screen is what you use to launch programs and switch between them when they're open. In Windows 7 you can pin any program to the taskbar so it's always just a click away, and you can rearrange the icons on the taskbar just by clicking and dragging. We've made the icons considerably bigger, too, so they're easier to use. Hover over the icons and you'll see thumbnails of every file or window that open in that program, and if you hover over the thumbnail, you'll see a full-screen preview of that window. Move the cursor off the thumbnail and the full-screen preview disappears.

Jump Lists

With Windows 7, we focused on keeping the things you use most right in front of you. One example: The new Jump List feature. It's a handy way to quickly reach the files you've been working with. To see the files you've used recently, just right click on the icon on your taskbar. So right-clicking on the Word icon will show your most recent Word documents. Plus, if there are other files you want to keep handy, you can just pin them to the Jump List so they'll always appear. That way, the documents you're likely to want are just a couple clicks away.

Some programs, such as Windows Media Player, can pre-populate their Jump Lists with common tasks. For example, on the Jump List for Windows Media Player, you'll see options to Play All Music or resume your last playlist. On the Jump List for Internet Explorer, you'll see frequently and recently viewed websites. With some programs, you'll even have quick access to tasks that, in the past, were only available from within the program, such as composing a new e-mail message.

Desktop enhancements

Windows 7 simplifies how you work with the windows on your desktop. You'll have more intuitive ways to open, close, resize, and arrange them.

For example, before, when you wanted to compare two open windows, you had to manually resize your open windows to show them side by side. With Snaps, you can simply grab a window and pull it to either side edge of the screen to fill half the screen. Snap windows to both sides, and it's easier than ever to compare those windows.

Another thing you may want to do is quickly see your gadgets or grab a file from your desktop. To see your desktop just move your mouse to the lower right corner of your desktop. That'll make all the open Windows transparent—so your desktop is immediately visible. Want to get all but one window out of your way? Grab the top of that window, shake it and all the other open windows will minimize to the taskbar. Shake the window again, and they'll all come back.

Windows Search

Introduced with Windows Vista, Windows Search helps you find virtually anything on your PC quickly and easily. The search results more relevant and easier to understand.

Looking for a file, e-mail, or application? While you can easily look through folders and menus, there's an even faster way. Just click on the Start button and you'll see a search box at the bottom of the Start menu. Just enter a word or few letters in the name or file you want, and you'll get an organized list of results.

Windows 7 uses libraries to show all content of a particular type in one spot. Say you've got photos in several locations on your PC. A lot will be in your Photos folder. But you might have some in documents folders too. Your photos library makes it easy for you to browse and use all your photos, no matter where they are on your PC.

By collecting things into a single view, libraries make it simpler to find what you're looking for. They're even more powerful with Windows Search. You can search your Libraries using filters to customize your search. For example, when you're looking for music you can search by album. Or search for photos by the date they were taken. You can go to your Documents Library, click on authors, and see all the documents on your computer sorted by author name.

Better device management

One of the great things about PCs is how they let us use such a wide array of devices. In the past, you had to use several different screens to manage different types of devices. But With Windows 7, you'll use a single Devices and Printers screen to connect, manage, and use whatever printers, phones, and other devices you have on-hand.

A new technology in Windows 7 called Device Stage takes device management a step further. This helps you interact with any compatible device connected to your computer. From here you can see device status and run common tasks from a single window. There are even pictures of the devices which makes it really easy to see what's there. Device manufacturers can customize Device Stage. So, if your camera manufacturer offers a cus-

tom version of Device Stage, then when you plug your camera into your PC, you could see things like the number of photos on your camera and links to help information.

HomeGroup

Today, you may have a network in your home that you use to share an internet connection. But it can be hard to share other things, like files and printers.

HomeGroup, makes connecting the computers in your home a painless process. HomeGroup is set up automatically when you add the first PC running Windows 7 to your home network. Adding more PCs running Windows 7 to the HomeGroup is an easy process. You can specify exactly what you want to share from each PC with all the PCs in the HomeGroup. Then, sharing files across the various PCs in your home is as easy as if all your data were on a single hard drive. So you can store digital photos on one computer and easily access them from a laptop anywhere in your home. Similarly, once in a HomeGroup, a printer is shared automatically with all of the PCs in your home.

Reduce interruptions

In previous versions, Windows was often able to tell you when something on your computer needed attention. But it often did so by interrupting you with pop-ups or other messages. These were helpful if the problem required immediate attention. But they were less helpful if the problem was not urgent and you didn't want to take care of it at the time.

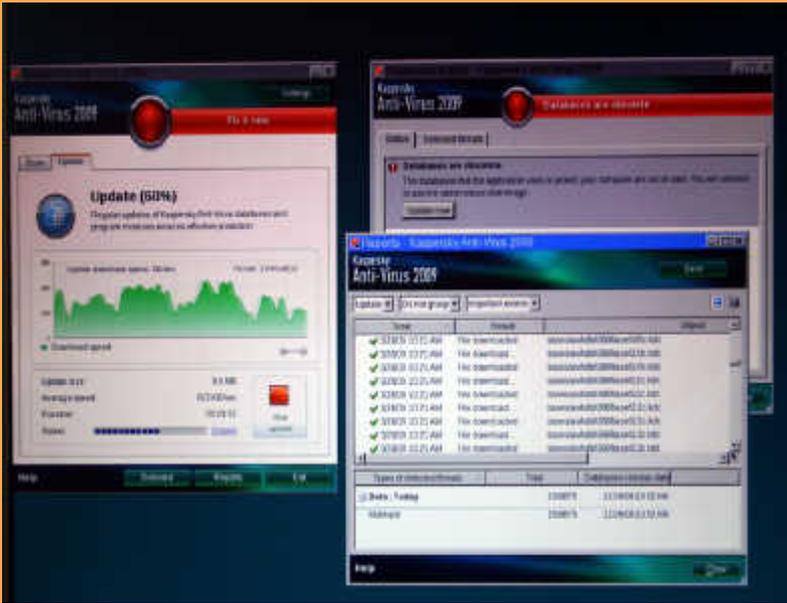
Rather than popping up with a message in the lower right of your screen, if Windows 7 needs your attention, you'll see an Action Center icon and can find out more by clicking it. If you don't have time to look at the alert immediately, Action Center will keep the information waiting for you to address later.

Compatibility

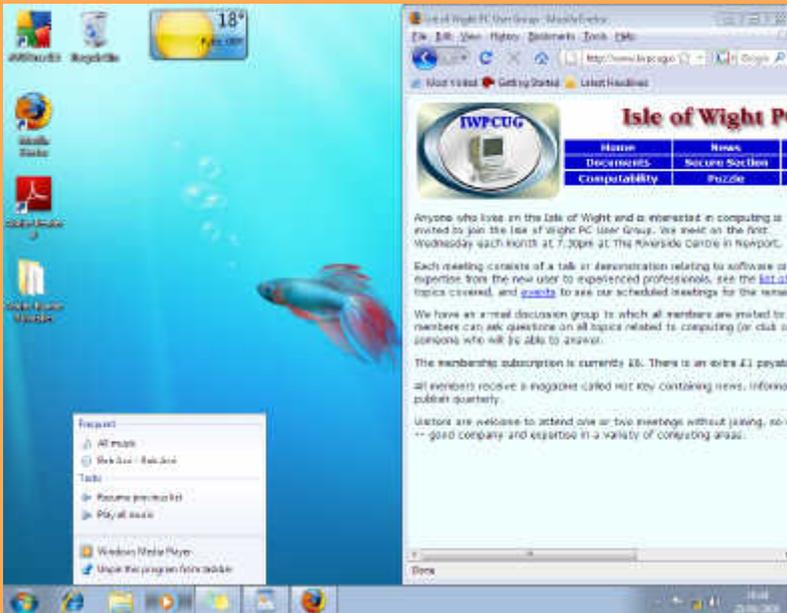
We know how important it is for the hardware and software you use today to work with Windows 7. So we're doing several things to help.

- You can expect that most of the products that work with Windows Vista to work with Windows 7.
- If you're buying a new device or application, look for the "Compatible with Windows 7" logo. These products have passed tests that Microsoft designed to install readily and run reliably with Windows 7.

With Windows 7 Professional or Ultimate, you'll be able to run many productivity and business programs designed for Windows XP. Some additional software will be necessary and it will be available free-of-charge as a download from Microsoft.



Kaspersky anti-virus boot disk downloads updates before running a virus scan



Screenshot of Windows 7, showing new taskbar, jump list from media player, and a weather gadget on the desktop

We try to publish HOTKEY quarterly in April, July, October and January
 This edition was compiled using Serif PagePlus 9 and printed by Island Printers
 East Street, Ryde. No responsibility can be accepted with respect to any advice or
 suggestions made in this journal.