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BRIGHTWEBS TIPS

Gerri's Computer Newsletter

August 2008

Moving on

It is with regret that I must tell you this is the last issue of this newsletter. I have thoroughly enjoyed writing it, but find I no longer have the time to do it well.

It is my hope at some point to turn these newsletters into a book so let me know if you'd like to be notified when I get it done.

Those of you who have been with me from the beginning in November 2003 will know that over 33 issues we've covered many topics and seen lots of changes in the computer world.

And yet the same topics are still relevant today, because people are still learning.

Using BCC

Here's one of my favourite topics or pet peeves from that first newsletter:

If you send on advice, jokes, recipes, whatever you like to your list of friends, do them all a favour—**Use BCC**.



There are two reasons why:

One is so that you aren't posting your friends' addresses in public places. It's the equivalent of writing their names on walls.

The second reason is that it can be a prime way for scammers to get addresses. You're putting names in a nice neat list for them, if you put all the names in either the To: box or the CC: box.

Do the math ~ if you send this to 50 of your closest friends and they send it to 50 of their closest friends and they send it to 50 of their closest friends, what do you bet one of them sells something via mail order?

So put your own name in the To: field and EVERYONE else's in the BCC field. If you can't see the BCC field when you open a new message window, in Outlook Express, click on View >All Headers.

Here's a link for more info:

<http://www.hamra.net/fun/bcc.htm>

Please pass this hint on to anyone who sends you one of those emails with everybody's name in clear. Together we can help cut back the spam that's ruining email for everyone.

Free e-cards from Hallmark

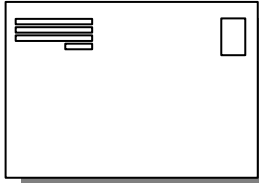
Sandy Berger's latest column tells how you can still send free e-cards, but why you might not want to. Sandy's writing a regular monthly column for *Smart Computing*, one of my favourite magazines. See her article here: <http://www.compukiss.com/free-stuff/free-e-cards-from-hallmark.html>

Langara classes this fall - now expanded to six different modules:

1. **The Basics** - if you've never used a computer, or you taught yourself email and not much else, this is the one for you - Getting started, saving files, writing letters, cutting and pasting and more. No prior experience needed. **Please** let them know at registration if you're using a Macintosh.
2. **Internet** - Getting the most out of your surfing experience. Browser tips, using Firefox, Favourites and Finding stuff with Google Tools.
3. **Email** - Get a webmail address, learn about attachments, save those cute pictures from friends.
4. **Stay Safe Online** - learn to protect yourself - know the signs of scams, download anti-virus, avoid danger.
5. **Maintain your computer** - Free tools you can use to clean up & keep your system running smoothly.
6. **Media on your computer** - use internet radio, media player and MP3, iTunes - learn how to download safely.

Come sign up for one or all - call **Dan Thorpe** at 604.323.5266

Chain letter hoaxes



In the old days forwarding a chain letter required some effort on the part of the sender - copying, finding an envelope and stamp, mailing. Today it's way too easy to pass the nuisance on to your friends and family.

Sophos, a security firm creating solutions for large and small businesses, has compiled a two-page list of scams and hoaxes sent as chain letters. Before you send on the next one you receive, I urge you to check it out at:

http://www.sophos.com/security/hoaxes/index_chain.html

And remember the important message at the end of each Sophos analysis:

If you receive this or a similar message, please do not forward it to your friends and colleagues. Forwarding unsolicited chain letters wastes time and bandwidth.

Wireless security

Sophos also has a page on setting up your wireless network so you're not sharing it with your neighbours and anyone who drives by. The wireless sales folks make it easy to setup, but that makes it easy to hack too. You need to change the default password, turn on encryption and make sure your patches are up to date. Read the full article here:



<http://www.sophos.com/security/best-practice/wi-fi.html>

Leaving your wireless home network unsecured is just as dangerous as leaving files of your most important personal documents on a street curb for all to see. Hackers can easily get into an unsecured wireless network and get financial information, business records or sensitive e-mails, according to a recent article in PC World. Check out the video tutorials at <http://spotlight.getnetwise.org/wireless/videos/>

Security is never ending

It's a sad fact of computing life in the internet era that you have to keep updating your security, using strong passwords, being careful where you post messages and ***not putting personal information online.***

If you want to see how much info is out there about you, try a site like canada411.com - first search for yourself, then search for your neighbours, do a reverse phone number lookup and you may be surprised at how easy you are to find.

Before you sign up for a newsletter, download free software or give your name and address to a store, consider whether the privacy trade-off is worth it. If not, get a throwaway email address to use, give them made-up information, or decide you don't really need the download after all.

Your tax \$ at work - call 1-800-GO-CANADA

Or 1 800 622-6232. This number is answered by a live human being who will help you find the correct service numbers for whatever services you need from the federal government - tax information, pension information, GST and more. Give them a call and get your tax dollars worth.



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Selecting with the keyboard

Here's a trick for generating a "right-click" from your keyboard. Make sure your cursor is where you want it and hit Shift+F10 at the same time. You can then use your arrow keys to select the menu option you need (hit Enter once you make the selection).

A daily online newsletter

from WorldStart is full of tips and tricks - check them out at Worldstart.com and choose either the daily or weekly version. All they ask for is a working email address, and the newsletter does contain ads for their products. Be sure to read their privacy policy at:

<http://www.worldstart.com/privacy.htm>

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Please contact me at 604-773-6107 for private lessons, with technical questions or to find out more about my classes. And visit <http://www.brightwebs.com> -check out the internet links and library pages. Tell your friends about them.*

Thanks for being part of this newsletter! I'll let you know when the book comes out.

Gerri