

November 2007

Display the Current Local Time

Anywhere - A cool trick you can do with Google is find the local time for any major city anywhere around the world. To do this, go to Google's Web site (www.google.com) and in the search box, type "time in *city name*." For example, if you wanted to get the time for Madrid, Spain, you would type in "Time in Madrid." Even better is that it will give you the time for any other cities around the world by that name as well. It surprised me that there was a London in Arkansas as well as Ontario and the UK.

Exchange rates too

Along with the local time, Google will give you the exchange rates for any two currencies. In the search box type 500 USD in CAD and you'll be amazed and delighted. Or not, depending on the source of your income. Don't use the \$ sign - for some reason it doesn't work.



Annoying phone numbers

You probably already know you can call *69 (for a fee) to find the number of the last person who called you (and didn't bother to leave a message), but this web-

site will tell you who that annoying call probably came from: http://www.computerconsulting.ca/phone_nums.htm

And in a number of cases the web author gives the contact phone number to call and get your name put on the company's DO NOT CALL list.

Putting an icon on the desktop

Since I just taught this again today, I thought I'd remind you, in case you've forgotten, how to add an icon (program shortcut) to your desktop.

1. Click on **Start >All Programs** (in XP) and find the program you want a shortcut to by clicking through the menus.
2. **Right click** on program name
3. Left click on **Send To:**
4. Left click on **Desktop - Create Shortcut**
5. Note that there is also a choice in this menu to simply create the shortcut, but if you do you will end up with an extra duplicate icon on the start menu instead of on your desktop.

Computer security

When you first get a new computer, you should always write down its serial number and model number.

If you have a brand name PC then your serial number should be on a little rectangular sticker posted on your computer. If it is a laptop then you will find it on the bottom. If it is a desktop then it will be on the side somewhere.

You should also write down a customer support phone number for the manufacturer of your computer. That way, if anything happens to your PC, you can call them right away for assistance. They will always ask you for the serial and model numbers, so it's very important to have that information on hand.

It's much easier to find the label before the computer is set on the floor in a corner with other furniture around it. Speaking of which, it's also better for the computer if you leave some space around it for airflow and cooling.

New Skills - New Service Offering

I've bought myself a Mac Powerbook because my son keeps telling me they are superior to the PC. I'm finding that all of the Office programs and the internet software work just like they do on the PC.

If you have a Mac or have been contemplating the Mac vs. PC question, let me know and I'll provide support and research on the topic for you.

And, as always, send me your questions and I'll try to answer them.

Be careful where you post your e-mail address

Spammers often use powerful technology to collect e-mail addresses off the Internet. They send spam to these addresses, and spoof them to look like the return address on the spam they send.

You can minimize the chance that they'll collect your e-mail address with strategies listed in Marcelle Amelia's blog on MSDN: <http://tinyurl.com/28sufv>

She talks about sharing email addresses only with family, not putting your email address in directories, spelling out the @ symbol, getting a free 'throwaway' email address, and *my personal pet peeve:*

DON'T forward messages with all the previous senders and recipients' names in the CC box or the body of the email. Erase the ones in the email, put the new ones in the BCC field.

For more information, read [Help keep spam out of your inbox.](http://www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/email/spam.mspx) at <http://www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/email/spam.mspx>

The Perils of Opening Your Computer to Strangers

Note: P2P like Kazaa or Limewire is file sharing software in which you make a section of your hard drive available to other computer users and they do the same to share music and video files and download programs. It's like leaving your front door open at night and telling the strangers they have to stay in the living room only.

A Washington state man who used P2P networks to steal per-

File Sharing Story links:

- http://www.theregister.co.uk/2007/11/06/p2p_id_theft_plea/print.html
- <http://tinyurl.com/3ax4au>
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21652542/>

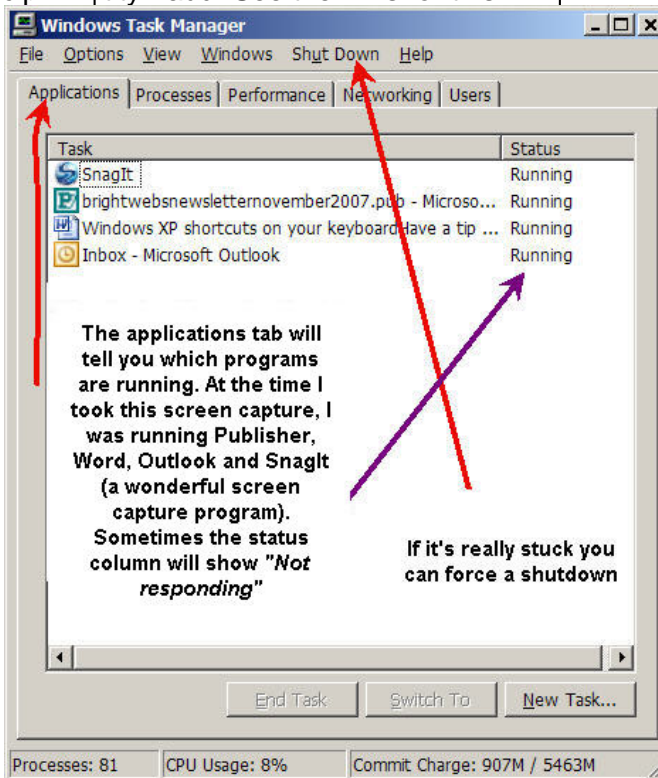
sonal information has pleaded guilty to mail fraud, aggravated identity theft, and another charge. Gregory Kopiloff admitted he used file-sharing programs to search other people's computers for information that could be used to commit identity fraud. He used the data to open credit lines; he bought and then resold more than US \$73,000 of goods. This is believed to be the first case in which someone has been tried for using P2P networks to commit data theft with the intent of committing identity fraud. See the links for this

Ctrl and the Alt key and tap the Delete key. Pressing the combo once (simultaneously) opens the Windows Task Manager. You'll be able to see which programs are running. Sometimes one of them will have a "not responding" beside it. You can turn it off by clicking on it and selecting "End Now". Is your machine totally locked up? Reach over, grab the mouse and click Shut Down.

Reminder about email security

Email services such as those from Google, Microsoft, AOL and Yahoo and even Outlook Express are insecure because messages are transported over the Web and stored on the ISP's server as well as the e-mail provider's server.

Use discretion and NEVER send sensitive information such as Social insurance numbers, passwords or any confidential information via email. Make a phone call instead.



story above. (From the SANS Newsbits Vol. 9, No. 89)

Fixing a stuck program

Ctrl-Alt-Del is the keyboard shortcut most useful when your Windows box locks up. Hold down the

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Thanks!

See you next time.

Gerri