DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC
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Volume 8 Number 3 May-June, 2019

Welcome to the forty-third edition of the ***DWPC Technology Newsletter***. We hope you find this information helpful. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send us an email, indicating such. If you received this newsletter from a friend and wish to be added to the mailing list, please send an email to the address above and indicate your desire to receive the newsletter. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends.

Security guidelines With the plethora of criminals attempting to compromise our security and steal our assets, it is important for us to ensure we practice "safe computing," in our digital lives. We need to recognize that we, as the end users, must be the first line of defense against online criminals. I have outlined ways to help you practice "safe computing," in many of my previous newsletters, but I would like to provide a condensed version, here. You can find older newsletters, containing the full articles, here: http://www.oregoncomputer.com/site/newsletters.html. **Ensure you are using "strong" passwords.** A strong password is at least 8 characters, contains upper- and lower-case characters, and at least one number and/or special character(s). The longer the password, the better. Avoid using common words or proper nouns. Ensure you use a **unique**, strong, password for each site that deals with money . . . banks, credit cards, brokerage, retirement, etc. **Be careful opening email attachments.** If you receive something unexpected, even apparently from someone you know, don't open the attachments or follow any links, until you verify it was genuinely from the sender . . . check with them that they did, in fact, send you the attachment. **Be careful opening links.** There are many malicious Websites out there. There are also legitimate Websites that could sell advertising to companies that have malicious content on their Website. Malicious entities use social engineering techniques trying to get people to visit their site, causing an infection. Most modern Web browsers will show the URL (the Universal Resource Locator, or "Web address") in their bottom left corner, when they are hovered over, while browsing. If the URL looks odd, you may not want to click on it. **Keep UAC at its default level and read prompts on the screen, before clicking.** All current versions of Microsoft Windows support UAC or "User Account Control," to prompt the user before making certain changes to the system that could cause consequences (such as a virus installing). At its default level, UAC should prompt the user before allowing things to make changes to the system. It is important to read the UAC prompts and reply to them appropriately, to help keep your system secure. Be extremely cautious when you receive UAC prompts while surfing the Internet or doing something that should not result in a change to Windows. **Read pop-ups when updating or installing software** and ensure you de-select undesired "optional components," which are not required and generally not desired.

Samsung's new Galaxy S10 series of phones Samsung has released its Galaxy S10 series of cellular phones. The Galaxy S10 will be offered in three screen sizes, 5.8" (Galaxy S10e), 6.1" (Galaxy S10) and 6.4" (Galaxy S10+). The S10e has a flat screen, where the S10 and S10+ sport Samsung's "Edge" screen. Along with the 10MP front "selfie" camera, the S10e adds rear 12MP wide-angle and 16MP ultra wide-angle cameras, and the S10 and S10+ add a 12MP telephoto camera. The Galaxy S10, along with the S7 and S8 series have an IP68 rating for dust, sand and moisture, meaning it can withstand a maximum of 30 minutes, submerged at no more than 1.5 meters depth of water. The Galaxy S10s support 5G, for faster data rates in areas that support 5G. The Galaxy S10+ also supports wireless charging of other devices, using its battery.

What is a Virtual Machine (VM)? "Virtual Machines," also known as "VMs," are a way to run an operating system within another operating system. Why would anyone want to do that?? Beside business applications, where there are many reasons to use a VM, an example of where a VM could help with a personal (non-business) computer is creating a Linux VM within your Windows computer, to safely browse the Internet from within your VM, without the need to worry about your Windows OS being affected. Even if something breaks the VM, snapshots of the VM can be used to easily recover from most issues. There are a number of Virtual Machine Managers, with some being free (such as Sun Microsystems' VirtualBox).

Hobby Corner—3D Printers 3D printing has been around for many years. A friend of mine treasures a chess rook printed in 3D in the 1990s . . . from a 3D printer costing thousands of dollars, which provided an amazing print. Flash forward to 2019 . . . although there are still specialty 3D printers, costing thousands of dollars, there are now many hobby level devices that will produce very acceptable 3D models. In January, I did a fair amount of research, looking for a 3D printer that did not require [the more expensive] custom filament (the "media" used to create the 3D models with the lesser-expensive 3D printers), had a fairly large print volume and was relatively inexpensive. The unit I purchased was the AnyCubic I3 Mega. The device, around $300, uses [the less expensive] "generic" filament and has a print volume of 201mm x 210mm x 205mm (x, y, z), or nearly 8" x 8" x 8". The device is extremely easy to assemble (8 bolts secure the two components, tightened using an included wrench). I have been using my I3 Mega for about 3 months and have found a number of things that are critical to successful 3D printing, that should be common to all filament-printing 3D printers. Likely, the most important thing is "leveling" the base of the 3D printer, at the correct distance. The "base" is the area where the build is printed. Having a level base with the proper distance from the "printhead" to the base, over the entire printable area, is critical. Having the printhead at the proper distance from the base is critical for the adhesion of the bottom layer to the base. Ensuring the base is leveled helps ensure the build is accurate as it continues to print in the "z" axis (vertical . . . the axis making the printer 3D . . . 2D ["standard"] printers print only on the x and y axis). "Slicing" software (included with the AnyCubic I3 Mega) takes 3D image files (many are available, for free, on the Internet) and turns them into files that instruct the 3D printer how to create each layer of the build. Other important aspects of 3D printing are brims, rafts, supports, print speed and layer thickness, which are ways to help ensure the 3D build is successful. I have been having a great time playing with this new technology. Please let us know if you have interest in 3D printing and we can assist you with your 3D printing experience!

Scam and Fraud Resources are available through the office of the Oregon Attorney General. As scammers are quickly creating elaborate ways to separate you from your money, I strongly suggest you use complex passwords, that you change often, and visit the Oregon Attorney General's Web site at www.oregonconsumer.gov, to keep abreast of newer scams and help learn ways to keep you and your family safer, and report potential scams. You can also contact Ellen Klem of the Oregon Attorney General's office at ellen.klem@state.or.us or 503.507.1061.

Java and QuickTime security alerts! As Oracle's Java and Apple's QuickTime continue to be security risks, I am continuing to include warnings in my newsletters. You can view the alert from the US Computer Emergency Readiness Team about QuickTime, at https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/alerts/TA16-105A. Oracle has a Web page that details how to disable Java, at: http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable_browser.xml. Either program can be uninstalled from the Winodws Programs and Features Control Panel. If you do need to run Java, ensure you are using the latest release and remove any old versions. If you have any questions about this or other security issues (or any other computer questions), please feel free to contact David W. Potts Consulting and we will be happy to help you.

How do I . . . Please submit questions to me via email to the email address at the top of page 1. Questions may be answered in future issues of this newsletter, or may be addressed individually. I often have clients who exclaim, after my correcting their issue, how they have been frustrated by working on an issue for weeks before calling me. Often the problem takes less than an hour to correct. Many mention how, next time, they will call me first to avoid the frustration! I have helped people do things from selecting and programming a high-tech remote control to setting up a company's network infrastructure.

David W. Potts Consulting will be happy to assist you with your hardware, software and network selection, purchase, integration, troubleshooting and training. We specialize in Microsoft Windows computers and networking and can also assist you with home theatre and other electronics and technology consulting.