

The Paper Modem

Nanaimo Computer Club

Volume 2002 Issue 10 November 2002

Computer Club Progress...

It has been a good month for your Computer Club... At the General meeting on Oct. 9th we had Charles Wood and Gerald Huppertz from Discovery Computers building a computer before our very eyes, Charles and Gerald did a great job, but made it look far easier than I believe it actually is, I detected words that made me wonder how a novice like me would know if the parts were compatible. The demo was helped along considerably by Pat Shore's camera that enabled everyone to get a 'look inside' while the boys were putting it together.

This great demo was followed, on SIG night, Oct. 15th. by our own Gloria Saunders with a Power Point Presentation, indicating just what one can do with that type of a program, and, for the second half of the evening, by an exploration of Photo Impressions and Publisher illustrating ideas for Christmas and other Festive occasions with the assistance of the templates that are provided in these programs.

We were also invited to Staples at Aulds Road on Oct. 20th where Angelito, Phil and Matthew demonstrated the new 'all in one' printers, combining scanning, printing and faxing. They also gave us a complete rundown on the latest in Lexmark, HP and Cannon printers, another job well done by our friends at Staples.

Something for everyone to learn a little from, I know that I absorbed quite a bit of info.. If anyone wants to learn a little more about the Wonderful World of Computers just continue to attend the meetings and let your Exec. know what you would like the Club to explore, they will do what they can to provide the info...
G.W.H..



What is Happening in November... Annual General Meeting Nov. 13th. 7.15pm

This is where you get to vote on next years exec..
and hear what is happening with Your Club.
It will be followed by a preview of new Microsoft Products and programs. Just in time for Christmas...

SIG Night Nov. 19th. 7.15pm

For those inspired by Gloria's demo on what can be done with Publisher and Photo Impressions, for Christmas...

This SIG is the time to bring your Creations
to show your fellow members..

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PC PRIMER # 552

By R.L. Creighton

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A few weeks ago, while I was broadcasting my weekly radio show, I received a recommendation from one of the listeners to solve a problem that has been eating away at me for months.

The problem: getting cut off from your Internet service provider in the middle of a download. It happens to me frequently. Have you ever been three and one half hours into a download, with a half hour left and lost the connection? How about doing that three times in one day and having to start over from scratch each time? I call that frustration of the highest order.

The solution offered to me is just one of many available software solutions. Download a program called "GetRight" from the Internet! Headlight Software, the creator of "GetRight" provides download tools and services to allow users to easily download files, and recover (resume downloading) should a breakdown occur.

After you download and install the program, and then reboot, you will be delighted to see the "GetRight" download box showing you that the file has been added, and the download commences. I was surprised to have a very clear woman's voice announce what was about to happen. As luck would have it, my original downloads went flawlessly. Eventually I had to interrupt to download on purpose just to see what happened. When I reactivated the Internet, I was pleasantly surprised to see "GetRight" open up and continue the download. When it was finished, it announced the completion and shut itself down.

I was so pleased with the results; I downloaded another long file, and shut it down four times in the process. Each time the computer was restored and the Internet started, "GetRight" started right up and continued from where it was stopped. Now, this is a solution I can live with. Running the programs after downloading has proven that the interruptions had no adverse effect on the continuity of the finished product.

There are multiple options that you can configure "GetRight" advanced features include scheduling downloads, dialing your modem, hanging up the modem (or shutting down your computer) when downloads are complete and finding the fastest server to download from. This is a utility that will save all of us a lot of grief. "GetRight" can be downloaded from www.getright.com this is a shareware program and you can download a trial of the program. If you do downloads, you will want to pay the \$20.00 fee and have an unlock code sent to you via e-mail.

Shareware is a concept that is getting better and better. There are many products like "GetRight" available from shareware sources that fulfill our computing needs. These products are there for us to try out and when proven successful, for us to purchase. The cost of these shareware programs is considerably less than a similar product from the commercial channel. When you use a great piece of software, be sure that you get back to the source and pay the fee. The person or persons that wrote the program need to be financially compensated for their work. Don't just feel that you got a great deal for nothing! Pay your way, and send off the check to the originator of the program.

Well there you have another utility to add to your arsenal against failure. Keep getting all the tools that you need, and learn how to use them. Join a user group in your area and learn from those that have gone before you. Then pass on what you know to others when all else fails, read the directions!



Club CD's are now available...

Cookies & Web Bugs...

By William T. Harding, Anita J. Reed, and Robert L. Gray

Cookies found on the World Wide Web are small unique text files created by a Web site and sent to your computer's hard drive. Cookie files record your mouse-clicking choices each time you get on the Internet. After you type in a Uniform Resource Locator (URL), your browser contacts that server and requests the specific Web site to be displayed on your monitor. The browser searches your hard drive to see if you already have a cookie file from the site.

If you have previously visited this site, the unique identifier code, previously recorded in your cookie file, is identified and your browser will transfer the cookie file contents back to that site. Now the server has a history file of what you selected when you previously visited that site. You can readily see this because your previous selections are highlighted on your screen. If this is the first time you have visited this particular site, an ID is assigned to you, and this initial cookie file is saved on your hard drive.

What is a Web bug?

A Web bug is a graphic on a Web page or in an e-mail message that is designed to monitor who is reading the Web page or an e-mail message. Like cookies, Web bugs are electronic tags that help Web sites and advertisers track visitors' whereabouts in cyberspace. However, Web bugs are essentially invisible on the page and are much smaller—about the size of the period at the end of a sentence.

Known for tracking down the creator of the Melissa virus, Richard Smith, chief technology officer of [Privacy-Foundation](#), is accredited with uncovering the Web bug technique. According to Smith, "Typically set as a transparent image and only one pixel by one pixel in size, a Web bug is a graphic on a Web page or in an e-mail message that is designed to monitor who is reading the Web page or e-mail message." According to Craig Nathan, Chief Technology Officer for [MEconomy](#), the 1x1 pixel Web bug "is like a beacon, so that every time you hit a Web page it sends a ping or callback to the server saying 'Hi, this is who I am, and this is where I am.'"

Most computers have cookies, which are placed on a person's hard drive when a banner ad is displayed or a person signs up for an online service. Savvy Web surfers know they are being tracked when they see a banner ad. However, people cannot see Web bugs, and anti-cookie filters will not catch them. So the Web bugs can wind up tracking surfers in areas online where

banner ads are not present or on sites where people may not expect to be trailed.

It is possible to check for bugs on a Web page. Once the page has loaded, view the page's source code. Search the page for an IMG tag that contains the attributes WIDTH=1 HEIGHT=1 BORDER=0 (or WIDTH="1" HEIGHT="1" BORDER="0"). This indicates the presence of a small, transparent image. If the image that this tag points to is on a server other than the current server (i.e., the IMG tag contains the text SRC="http://"), it is quite likely a Web bug.

Web bugs: The nearly invisible cookie Part 2 of 3

Privacy and other Web bug issues

Advertising networks, such as [DoubleClick](#) or Match Point, use Web bugs (also called Internet tags) to develop an "independent accounting" of the number of people in various regions of the world, as well as various regions of the Internet, who have accessed a particular Web site.

Advertisers also account for the statistical page views within the Web sites. This is very helpful in planning and managing the effectiveness of the content, because it provides a survey of target market information (i.e., the number of visits by users to the site). In this same spirit, the ad networks can use Web bugs to build a personal profile of sites a person has visited. This information can be warehoused on a database server and mined to determine what types of ads are to be shown to that user. This is referred to as *directed advertising*.

Web bugs used in e-mail messages can be even more invasive. In Web-based e-mail, Web bugs can be used to determine if and when an e-mail message has been read. A Web bug can provide the IP address of the recipient, whether or not the recipient wishes that information disclosed. Within an organization, a Web bug can give an idea of how often a message is being forwarded and read.

This can prove to be helpful in direct marketing to return statistics on the effectiveness of an ad campaign. Web bugs can be used to detect if someone has viewed a junk e-mail message or not. People who do not view a message can be removed from the list for future mailings.

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Cookies & Web Bugs... continued...

With the help of a cookie, the Web bug can identify a machine, the Web page it opened, the time the visit began, and other details. That information, sent to a company that provides advertising services, can then be used to determine if someone subsequently visits another company page in the same ad network to buy something or to read other material. "It's a way of collecting consumer activity at their online store," says David Rosenblatt, senior vice president for global technology at DoubleClick. However, for consumer watchdogs, Web bugs and other tracking tools represent a growing threat to the privacy and autonomy of online computer users.

It is also possible to add Web bugs to Microsoft Word documents. A Web bug could allow an author to track where a document is being read and how often. In addition, the author can watch how a "bugged" document is passed from one person to another or from one organization to another.

Some possible uses of Web bugs in Word documents include the following:

- Detecting and tracking leaks of confidential documents from a company
- Tracking possible copyright infringement of newsletters and reports
- Monitoring the distribution of a press release
- Tracking the quoting of text when it is copied from one Word document to a new document

Web bugs are made possible by the ability in Microsoft Word for a document to link to an image file that is located on a remote Web server. Because only the URL of the Web bug is stored in a document and not the actual image, Microsoft Word must fetch the image from a Web server each and every time the document is opened. This image-linking feature then puts a remote server in the position to monitor when and where a document file is being opened. The server knows the IP address and host name of the computer that is opening the document.

A host name will typically include the company name of a business. The host name of a home computer usually has the name of a user's Internet Service Provider. Short of removing the feature that allows linking to Web images in Microsoft Word, there does not appear to be a good preventative solution. In addition to Word documents, Web bugs can also be used in Excel 2000 and PowerPoint 2000 documents.

Web bugs: The nearly invisible cookie Part 3 of 3

Synchronization of Web bugs and cookies

Additionally, Web bugs and browser cookies can be synchronized to a particular e-mail address. This trick allows a Web site to know the identity of people (plus other personal information about them) who come to the site at a later date. To further explain this, when a cookie is placed on your computer, the server that originally placed the cookie is the only one that can read it. In theory, if two separate sites place a separate unique cookie on your computer, they cannot read the data stored in each other's cookies. This usually means, for example, that one site cannot tell that you have recently visited the other site.

However, the situation is very different if the cookie placed on your computer contains information that is sent by that site to an advertising agency's server and that agency is used by both Web sites. If each of these sites places a Web bug on their page to report information back to the advertising agency's computer, every time you visit either site, details about you will be sent back to the advertising agency utilizing information stored on your computer relative to both sets of cookie files. This allows your computer to be identified as a computer that visited each of the sites.

An example will further explain this: When Bob, the Web surfer, loads a page or opens an e-mail that contains a Web bug, information is sent to the server housing the "transparent GIF." Common information being sent includes the IP address of Bob's computer, his type of browser, the URL of the Web page being viewed, the URL of the image, and the time the file was accessed. Also, potentially being sent to the server, the thing that could be most threatening to Bob's privacy, is a previously set cookie value, found on his computer.

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Cookies & Web Bugs... continued...

TechRepublic and Auerbach Publications

This information originally appeared in the Summer 2001 issue of *Information Systems Management*. It appears here under agreement with Auerbach Publications. This excerpt is from the Auerbach report "Cookies and Web bugs: What they are and how they work together." For information on subscribing to this journal or to see a list of previously published topics, [click here](#). To find out about other Auerbach publications, click [here](#).

Depending on the nature of the preexisting cookie, it could contain a whole host of information from usernames and passwords to e-mail addresses and credit card information. To continue with our example, Bob may receive a cookie upon visiting Web Site #1 that contains a transparent GIF that is hosted on a specific advertising agency's server. Bob could also receive another cookie when he goes to Web Site #2 that contains a transparent GIF which is hosted on the same advertising agency's server. potential for the aggregation of Bob's personal information as well.

It is certainly technically possible, through standardized cookie codes, that different servers could synchronize their cookies and Web bugs, enabling this information to be shared across the Web. If this were to happen, just the fact that a person visited a certain Web site could be spread throughout many Internet servers, and the invasion of one's privacy could be endless.

Web site sources

- [The Blind Alley's "Web Bugs Nibbling at Consumer Privacy"](#)
- [CIAC's Information Bulletin I-034 "Internet Cookies"](#)
- [HowStuffWorks' "How Internet Cookies Work"](#)

This illuminating article was submitted by Greg Wilson... Thanks Greg.



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Visiting Microsoft

My new job as Trainer for Microsoft MSN Technical Support provides me with the occasional opportunity to visit some of the Microsoft facilities in Seattle. In fact my first visit was on the same day I became an employee of RMH Teleservices in Nanaimo. After signing on in the early afternoon, I went home to pack my bag and was checking in at the Silver Cloud Inn in Redmond at 11:30 PM.



Silver Cloud Inn Redmond

The Silver Cloud Inn is a great place to stay if you have business in the Redmond area. The location is very quiet and there are a multitude of eateries in the immediate area. It is a great area for a quiet evening walk as the tree lined boulevards shed their burden of traffic.

Driving through Seattle certainly leaves a lot to be desired. Here is evidence that no matter how many lanes you create there will always be enough automobiles to fill them. Anyone thinking that increasing the size and number of freeways is a solution to traffic problems should visit Seattle. Here is a major city that is at least 25 years behind in designing a rapid transit system... wow! One of Microsoft's many facilities in Seattle, is located near lovely Sammish Lake, an area with an abundance of parks and walking paths. While state of the art, the Microsoft facilities provide a relaxed atmosphere.

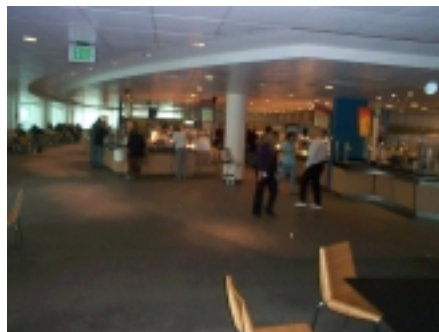
The first thing you notice is the effort that has gone into making each centre flow into its surroundings. In spite of the brick, glass and large cobble stone areas they fit very nicely. There is more than adequate parking, a variety of outdoor seating and picnic tables.



Microsoft Sammish Lake

Employees enjoy a large cafeteria with a variety of options that satisfy most appetites. Prices are reasonable, although in US dollars, and there are adequate exercise facilities to work off the excess.

My second visit to Microsoft coincided with the anniversary of the destruction of the World Trade Centre. A ceremony was held to remember those that had lost their lives during this devastating event. Four minutes of silence for each of the aircraft involved in the incident was supplemented by an honor guard and a piper.



Sammish Lake Cafeteria

As our visit involved supporting an updated Microsoft application, we of course spent many hours in the classroom. Extremely well equipped about sums it up here. Pairs of multimedia projectors, retracting screens and many computers. Developers and content advisors come and go as their modules are revealed and discussed.



Sept. 11-Honour Guard

They all carry notebooks on which they make required changes to software or content, each connecting through a wireless network. It was an exciting experience to see how quickly and efficiently programs are developed.

What was the software in question? Can't tell you yet, so look for an update in the next Paper Modem.



RMH employees in the sun
This report provided by
Bob Goerzen.