

Meeting 12/03/2014

Please note: Due to the school's Easter holidays there will be no April meeting of the Computer Group. Next meeting Wednesday 14th May.

Agony Corner:

We had a quick review of last month's problems which were answered on the day or in the follow up email (q.v.), and then moved on to new issues...

1) 'I have a file prepared in 'Word Pad' (rtf) but when I open it in Word 2007 I can't find the spell checker....'

- Spelling and grammatical errors are automatically highlighted in a document, spelling with a red wavy line beneath and grammar with a green.
- Right clicking on this reveals the correction.
- If you want to do a more detailed whole document spell/grammar check, click the 'Review' tab on the ribbon.
- On the top left hand side is a large tick labelled ABC/spelling Grammar. Click this and you can move through the document.
- This also applies in Word 2010. In Word 2003 you will find the spell checker under the 'Tools' menu''.

2) 'Whilst downloading a free programme I forgot to uncheck a 'browser add-on' box. As a consequence my browser (Chrome) and search engine (Google) were hijacked by a malicious programme 'Conduit' which was extremely difficult to get rid of'.....

- Many good free programmes can be tainted like this. Always download from a legitimate site and even then, when installing, always go through the 'custom install' rather than the automatic or 'recommended'. You can then uncheck anything if it doesn't look right.
- What happened here was that a PuP (potentially unwanted programme) had been installed. 'Conduit' is one of many such (Bubble Dock is another) which can lead the unwary to malicious sites. It was not removed by any normal means (e.g. did not show up in control panel add/remove) nor was it identified by Anti Malware bytes, CCleaner or Spybot Search and Destroy.
- It was finally removed by AdwCleaner (www.snipca.com/11480) and recently Computer Active also recommended Junkware Removal Tool (<http://thisisudax.org>).

3) 'I have a file that is 'read only' but I would like to edit it. I've tried copying and pasting into Word but many errors result (spelling, grammar etc.). How can I best deal with this?

- Without knowing the exact properties of the original file (is it Word, pdf or other?). Normally copying and pasting into a new blank document would result in an editable file even if the original is read only.
- It may have been encrypted in some way and/or need a password to operate correctly. When pasting, it's always useful to look at 'paste special' which gives options as to how it will be formatted. Using this method it's quite easy to make an editable Word copy of a pdf.
- If the original file is password protected, I've found that if it's opened in Libre Office, the password protection is ripped out.
- You could also try copying then pasting into Notepad. This gives an unformatted text file that can then be pasted into or opened in Word for formatting and editing.
- It's worth pointing out that it's always better to send documents as *.pdfs rather than *.docs which can be easily distorted by the recipient's version of Word.

4) 'I was concerned when I found out that I was using a 'trial' version of AVG when I thought that I was on the 'Free' one?'

- Easily done! AVG make it difficult to correctly install the free version and instead lures you to the trial of the paid version then nag you to buy when this expires.
- Just make sure which boxes you are ticking when downloading/installing the software. Ignore the long list of benefits of the paid version, the free one is more than adequate for the home user.
- Several of our members have found Avast to be a more user friendly free antivirus programme

5) 'Recently when using Firefox browser I've been overwhelmed by adverts so I've had to move to Internet Explorer which is not as badly effected. I have not been able get 'Chrome' to install in my machine'...

- Mozilla Firefox is open source and as such is vulnerable to attacks. You may have been invaded by one of the PuPs as in 2) above so you could try running one of the removal tools described.
- There is no reason at all why Chrome should not install on an XP machine. Chrome requires Windows XP Service Pack 2 or higher and if you haven't done it yet it's recommended that you upgrade XP to the latest service pack (SP3) for security and software compatibility. In fact, Chrome have committed to supporting XP until at least April 2015
<http://chrome.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/extending-chrome-support-for-xp-users.html>

6) 'I'm having difficulty in transferring my photos from the memory card into a selected folder on my PC'.

- This should be a very easy process, but more information needed (camera, software PC etc.) before question can be answered fully.
- Member also belongs to Photo group and this can be dealt thoroughly with at the next meeting.

Topic for the day: 'The Pending Demise of Windows XP - what should we be concerned about and what are the alternatives?' Many of our members are still on XP and would wish to continue with it, others have graduated onto Windows 7 and some have already taken a chance on Windows 8.1

We look together at these issues by discussion and reference to a PowerPoint presentation I'd prepared to look at the options.

For easy reference, I've converted it to a pdf, link

<http://u3astowmarket.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/demise-of-xp.pdf>

We had an additional project on the day – **Skype**. Michael has family in Australia and was interested in setting up Skype on his laptop so he could chat to them face to face.

He brought his laptop to the meeting and (*with considerable help from Wendy, thank you!*) by the end he was up and running to the extent that I could have a visual conversation with him across the room from my own laptop.

Next Meeting

Topic for our meeting on 14/05/2014: We have briefly looked in the past at a learning web site, 'gcflearnfree' and seen that it is extremely comprehensive and clutter free source of information for people of all levels of computer literacy, so I thought it worthwhile that, as a group, we could go further into it.

Here are the main pages that show all that's available.....

<http://www.gcflearnfree.org/topics>

<http://www.gcflearnfree.org/computers/computerbasics>

Please have a browse and pick out one or two that are of interest to you and/or the group and then, at the meeting, these can be explored together (if we wished, there's actually more than enough here to sustain us for several meetings!)