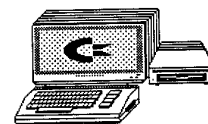


SOUTHERN DISTRICTS COMPUTER USERS CLUB INC.



April 2006



Club Web Site <http://videocam.net.au/sdcuci/index>.

**MEETINGS are held on
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the Month, at
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**Southern Districts
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Inc.**

For further information
about S.D.C.U.C.Inc.

Contact The Club President,
Ron Stephens 8 387 2814

Correspondence to
The Secretary
S.D.C.U.C.I.
Box 991
Morphett Vale 5162
Email to

roymarj@optusnet.com.au



George Potter	2 nd April
Emma Boss	16 th April
Joyce Orr	19 th April
Dorothy Newton	24 th April
Ron Stephens	29 th April
Monica Warren	30 th April

The President's Page

How time flies. Easter has come and gone, Anzac Day is upon us and before we know it the football season will be over and Port Power will have produced another Grand Final Winning Team.

This month one of our own members, John Leftbridge, has offered to give us a presentation on the mysteries of MP3 and other related files used, in the main, to download music from the net. Maybe we are not all converts to Mick Jagger or Inxs, but many types of music can be downloaded if only you have an idea of the significance of the type of file required and how you use it. I know John has put a lot of time and effort into his presentation and I'm sure it will be very interesting to wander through this side of computer use.

I'm glad to report that our Newsletter Editor, Rob Moulding, has had success with the very worrying problem he endured with his computer. It tested to the limit all of our most knowledgeable members, but occasionally you have to revert to the experts and this was one of those times. However, Rob has gone back to sleeping without a keyboard under his pillow and his wife and his faithful old dog are pleased to have "Normal Rob" back with them again.

We, your Committee, are still looking to the Ladies of the club to come up with a subject or two that would be of specific interest to them. A couple of topics mentioned have been Scrap Booking and Buying on E-Bay, but I'm sure there must be other topics as well, so let's hear about your choice.

Whilst on the subject of Committees, keep in mind that we need fresh ideas and fresh talents to keep our club alive and viable, so if you feel you could assist in this area, please put your hand up and offer your help. As for my situation, I'm afraid my health will not allow me to continue after this year and we can't exist without good leadership.

To our members who are not experiencing the best of health at this time, our thoughts are with you and we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery. Talking about health, don't forget your computer also needs a thorough check up every month or so and that means keep up with a regular "defrag", clear out all those E-mails you have received and don't need, tidy up your Desktop, remove all the biscuit crumbs from your keyboard, wipe over your monitor and just generally tidy up everything. If nothing else it will keep you busy for a short time and you may even see a difference in the performance of your unit. And while you're at it don't forget your printer and scanner, they are also notorious for gathering dust in odd places which may eventually lead to a malfunction.

Enough for now. I hope you all have had an enjoyable and safe Easter, haven't eaten too much chocolate and are fit and well to attend future meetings.

Ron Stephens

President

THE THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Computers make it easier to do a lot of things, but most of the things they make it easier to do don't need to be done.

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Handy Shortcuts for Navigating in Word

Here are a few tricks using the CTRL key that I find useful for quickly navigating through Word documents:

Hold down the CTRL key and then press the RIGHT ARROW key to move from any point in a word to the beginning of the next word.

Use CTRL+LEFT ARROW key to move from any point in a word to the beginning of that word.

Use CTRL+UP ARROW key to move to the beginning of a paragraph.

Use CTRL+DOWN ARROW key to move to the beginning of the following paragraph.

USE THE ULTIMATE CONFIGURATION TOOL

(XP Professional Edition only)

One of the Windows XP configuration tools available is hidden right there in your system, but most people don't even know it exists. It's called the Local Group Policy Editor, or gpedit for short. To invoke this editor, select Start and then Run, then type the following:

gpedit.msc

After you hit ENTER, you'll be greeted by gpedit, which lets you modify virtually every feature in Windows XP without having to resort to regedit. Dig around and enjoy!

Use with some caution the editor



WORD 2000 2003 Tip

How do I change the default document font?

Choose **Font** from the **Format** menu, then set all of the attributes you want for your default font.

Click the **Default** button.

Word will inform you that this change will affect all documents based on the **Normal** template.

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Disable Boot Virus Detection

The boot virus detection setting is a holdover from the early days of computer viruses, when the greatest threat was from virus programs that wrote themselves into the boot sector of hard disks or the partition table. Some motherboards are equipped to monitor any attempt to write to these areas during boot up, and halt the process with a warning for the user.

Since every version of Windows after 3.1 needs to write to these areas during install, and the modern virus style of choice is the email worm, this feature is now obsolete. Disable it for convenience and increased boot speed. It will commonly be found in the 'advanced BIOS features' section of the BIOS.

Disable the XP loading screen

To speed up your boot process slightly, disable the Windows XP loading screen. This can be accomplished easily by opening the MSCONFIG utility ('start\run and type msconfig'), selecting the 'boot.ini' tab and checking the /NOGUIBOOT option.

When you boot your system, you will see a black screen in between POST and the welcome screen from now on.

Reduce wait time after XP boots

A common performance problem with Windows XP is 'start lag,' in which the operating system boots up normally, the desktop is visible and usable, but programs will not start, and selecting icons and using the start menu are extremely slow. This can take anywhere from a few seconds to a couple of minutes to clear up, and can make using the operating system extremely frustrating, especially if you are in a hurry after the reboot.

This delay is generally caused by Windows XP's networking services looking for other computers and advertising their functions over the computer's network connections.

If this problem is driving you nuts, there is a way to reduce or eliminate the delay, though if you are attached to a home network, it will reduce your computer's functionality on that network.

If your computer is not attached to a home network:

Right click on 'my computer' and select 'manage.'

Expand 'services and applications' and select 'services' to open the services window.

Highlight the 'workstation' service, right click and select 'properties.'

Set the 'startup type' dropdown box to 'disabled.' Click 'ok.'

Note that you will need to re-enable the workstation service should you wish to network your PC in the future.

If your computer is part of a home network:

Go to 'start\control panel\network and internet connections\network connections.'

Right click your current network connection (should be 'local area connection' unless you have more than one network adaptor) and select 'properties.'

Uncheck the 'File and Print Sharing' box and press 'ok.'

Note that this will disable your computer's ability to share files and printers over the network, though it should not affect your ability to access such resources on another system.

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Make Your Computer Open Faster



The Windows XP operating system automatically searches for attached network printers and remote drives and folders each time you open 'my computer.' This can cause a considerable delay before you can actually

see the icons.

If you find yourself using 'my computer' often and gritting your teeth at the delay, there is an easy way to speed things up.

Open 'My Computer.' Go to 'Tools\Folder Options...' Select the view tab and uncheck the 'Automatically search for network folders and printers' box. Click OK.

'My computer' will now open much faster.

Remove the Desktop Picture

Your desktop background consumes a fair amount of memory and can slow the loading time of your system. If you are more concerned with performance than looks, remove your picture and go with a blank, coloured background.

Right click on an open area of the desktop and select **properties**.

Select the **desktop tab** and in the **background window**, highlight **none** Press **ok**.

From the Editor

Some people can tell what time it is by looking at the sun, but I have never been able to make out the numbers.

Keep an Object's Center in Same Place When Resizing in Publisher

To keep the center of an object in the same place in your publication while you resize the object, click the object, then hold down CTRL while you resize the object. Release the mouse button before you release CTRL

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Or speak to Jim Greenfield or Keith Jones at The Southern Districts Computer Users Club Meeting



MEETING TOPICS

May 17th Charles Hart will give a presentation of Canon Digital Cameras and Canon Products

Microsoft Word 2002 Tip

Remove All Formatting in Two Easy Steps

Here's a great way to remove all of the formatting from a Word document or just a selected portion of the document:

Select the whole document by pressing CTRL+A or just select the portion of the document you wish to change.

Press CTRL+SHIFT+N.

Presto! All of your formatting is removed from the document or selection.

Random Shutdowns? You May Have a Worm

A virus or worm may cause your Windows XP machine to turn off unexpectedly

Does your Windows XP system randomly shut down or try to reboot every few minutes? If so, your machine *may* be infected with the Blaster, Sasser, or other worms. I say *may* because I don't want to scare you - there are other things that may be causing these random shutdowns, but if you are experiencing this annoyance, you may want to check out the following sites on Microsoft.com that explain the Blaster and Sasser worms, how to stop your system from getting exploited again by the worms, and how to completely remove the worms from your system.

The web addresses:<http://www.microsoft.com/security/incident/blast.asp>

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/incident/sasser.asp>

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While every attempt has been made to verify that the information in this newsletter is correct, the Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies.

Likewise no member of the committee or member of the Southern Districts Computer Users Club will accept any liability for any damage occurring to a computer or to any computer systems from following instructions given in this newsletter.

NTFS vs. FAT

To NTFS or not to NTFS—that is the question. But unlike the deeper questions of life, this one isn't really all that hard to answer. For most users running Windows XP, NTFS is the obvious choice. It's more powerful and offers security advantages not found in the other file systems. But let's go over the differences among the file systems so we're all clear about the choice. There are essentially three different file systems available in Windows XP: FAT16, short for File Allocation Table, FAT32, and NTFS, short for NT File System.

FAT16

The FAT16 file system was introduced way back with MS-DOS in 1981, and it's showing its age. It was designed originally to handle files on a floppy drive, and has had minor modifications over the years so it can handle hard disks, and even file names longer than the original limitation of 8.3 characters, but it's still the lowest common denominator. The biggest advantage of FAT16 is that it is compatible across a wide variety of operating systems, including Windows 95/98/Me, OS/2, Linux, and some versions of UNIX. The biggest problem of FAT16 is that it has a fixed maximum number of clusters per partition, so as hard disks get bigger and bigger, the size of each cluster has to get larger. In a 2-GB partition, each cluster is 32 kilobytes, meaning that even the smallest file on the partition will take up 32 KB of space. FAT16 also doesn't support compression, encryption, or advanced security using access control lists.

FAT32

The FAT32 file system, originally introduced in Windows 95 Service Pack 2, is really just an extension of the original FAT16 file system that provides for a much larger number of clusters per partition. As such, it greatly improves the overall disk utilization when compared to a FAT16 file system. However, FAT32 shares all of the other limitations of FAT16, and adds an important additional limitation—many operating systems that can recognize FAT16 will not work with FAT32—most notably Windows NT, but also Linux and UNIX as well. Now this isn't a problem if you're running FAT32 on a Windows XP computer and sharing your drive out to other computers on your network—they don't need to know (and generally don't really care) what your underlying file system is.

The Advantages of NTFS The NTFS file system, introduced with first version of Windows NT, is a completely different file system from FAT. It provides for greatly increased security, file-by-file compression, quotas, and even encryption. It is the default file system for new installations of Windows XP, and if you're doing an upgrade from a previous version of Windows, you'll be asked if you want to convert your existing file systems to NTFS. Don't worry. If you've already upgraded to Windows XP and didn't do the conversion then, it's not a problem. You can convert FAT16 or FAT32 volumes to NTFS at any point. Just remember that you can't easily go back to FAT or FAT32 (without reformatting the drive or partition), not that I think you'll want to.

The NTFS file system is generally not compatible with other operating systems installed on the same computer, nor is it available when you've booted a computer from a floppy disk. For this reason, many system administrators, used to recommend that users format at least a small partition at the beginning of their main hard disk as FAT. This partition provided a place to store emergency recovery tools or special drivers needed for reinstallation, and was a mechanism for digging yourself out of the hole you'd just dug into. But with the enhanced recovery abilities built into Windows XP I don't think it's necessary or desirable to create that initial FAT partition.

When to Use FAT or FAT32 If you're running more than one operating system on a single computer (see Dual booting in Guides), you will definitely need to format some of your volumes as FAT. Any programs or data that need to be accessed by more than one operating system on that computer should be stored on a FAT16 or possibly FAT32 volume. But keep in mind that you have no security for data on a FAT16 or FAT32 volume—any one with access to the computer can read, change, or even delete any file that is stored on a FAT16 or FAT32 partition. In many cases, this is even possible over a network. So do not store sensitive files on drives or partitions formatted with FAT file systems.

Improving Windows XP Boot Speed



Disable floppy drive seek

The floppy drive seek BIOS option sets whether your PC will attempt to detect the floppy (a:) drive during boot up. Whether it finds one or not, once Windows has loaded it becomes irrelevant, as control of hardware devices including drives are handed over from the BIOS to the operating system.

Disabling the 'floppy drive seek' option in the 'advanced BIOS features' section of the BIOS can save you a few seconds on boot up, and since the setting has no actual effect, disable it.

Set primary display adaptor

Most motherboards have a BIOS setting entitled 'primary graphics adaptor' or 'Init display first' which affects whether the system will attempt to initialise an AGP graphics card or a PCI graphics card first. While it has no effect on any other facet of system performance, setting the correct value here (many boards default to 'PCI') may save you a few seconds of booting time. This option can be found in the 'advanced chipset features' or 'integrated peripherals' sections of the BIOS.



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