

USB 2.0 RELEASE

From TIPWORLD.COM

The specification for version 2.0 of the USB (Universal Serial Bus) standard has been finalized and released. This new spec defines a 480-Mbps data transfer rate, as opposed to the relatively creeping version 1.1 rate of 12 Mbps, currently the standard in many PCs.

What does this new specification mean to the end user? Over the next few days, I'll pass along some things to keep in mind while shopping for USB-capable PCs and peripherals.

First, know that you have a little time to plan your next USB move. Demonstrations of working USB 2.0 controllers and transceivers are just beginning to happen at conferences this fall. Expect the first USB 2.0-capable PCs and products toward the end of this year and the beginning of the next.

Because the new USB 2.0 specification calls for new controller chips, your current USB-ready PC will not operate at USB 2.0's faster data rate over the USB bus. You may be able to purchase a separate USB controller add-on product that overrides your current USB controller, but that product only exists in theory at the moment.

If USB 2.0 is something you feel you need, consider a new PC purchase toward the end of this year and the beginning of the next when new USB 2.0 controller chips first appear in new systems.

USB 2.0 controller chips will be backward compatible with the USB 1.1 specification--meaning that current USB peripherals you purchase now will still operate on USB 2.0-capable systems. Thus, you won't be wasting money if you purchase a USB 1.1 interface device now.

However, you should keep in mind that USB 2.0 products can operate at data transfer rates 40 times faster than USB 1.1 devices. For low-bandwidth devices like mice and keyboards, the improved performance of USB 2.0 will make no noticeable difference. But with high-bandwidth devices like DV cameras, you will see a significant difference.

If you plan to buy a high-bandwidth device now, consider going with a high-performance alternative interface like FireWire, or consider waiting for a USB 2.0 version of that product to arrive.

USB 2.0 (480 Mbps) now competes directly with FireWire (400Mbps) in terms of performance. Although we all originally heard that USB would be designated for low-bandwidth devices like keyboards and mice, and that FireWire would target higher-bandwidth devices like video capture products, this is no longer the case. Perhaps fortunately, FireWire still hasn't become widely available as an interface choice, at least for the Wintel world of products. Many PCs users therefore have no choice to make. Waiting for a USB 2.0 version of a product is the best performance choice for those whose systems are not FireWire-

(Continued on page 8 - USB 2.0)



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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

L.C.A.C.E.

c/o Group Ambassador
409 S. Elmwood Ave.
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Membership

Membership for L.C.A.C.E. is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries, and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and is now available on our WEB site at <http://inf-net.com/lcace>.

Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page -\$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card -\$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send Camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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ARTICLE DEADLINE

The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at corky@foxvalley.net or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net or the Club's E-mail at lcace@inf-net.com

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The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions and will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

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As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not included in this listing. Send E-Mail to lcace@inf-net.com with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you.

Members Web Sites

Corky Bell

<http://users.foxvalley.net/~corky>

Phil Grimm

<http://public.surf.free.com/pgrimm>

JJ

http://easyfoto.com/jj_johnson

Time to Renew

The following members need to renew their membership. This information will be published in the News Journal and will be posted on our WEB site which is:

<http://www.inf-net.com/lcace>

If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

The following Member(s) need to submit renewal applications:

Dan Meyer - 10/00

Linda Busch - 11/00

Teri Hanlon - 11/00

Phil Grimm - 11/00

Walter Sheets - 11/00

Mike McEnery - 11/00

James Rutledge - 11/00

Donna Kalinoski - 11/00

Edward Herdliska - 11/00

If you have already filed an application, please disregard this notice.



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Year 2000 Calendar

The following are the tentative dates, locations, and/or the agenda for each of the L.C.A.C.E. Meetings for the Year 2000:

October 14th

Grant Township Meeting Hall
Diamond Rio

November 11th

Grant Township Meeting Hall
CD Writers

December 9th

University of Illinois
Auditorium
Grayslake, Illinois

**Annual Christmas Party
&
Swap Fest & RAFFLE**

NOTICE

The next meeting of L.C.A.C.E. is at the Grant Township Meeting Hall in Ingleside, Illinois on Saturday, October 14th.

Reminder

If you have an article for the News Journal, it must be submitted to the Editor before the 20th of each month.

See the CLUB PICTURES at:

www.easyphoto.com/lcace

Take a look, you may be in there!

FOR SALE

Olympus D-500L Digital Camera



I have moved up to one of Olympus newer models so I'm letting go of my D-500L. This is one digital camera that feels and looks like a SLR. The D-500L "high resolution" point and shoot digital cameras, producing 1024x768 pixel images. To accommodate situations in which you might not need all that resolution, both cameras provide "low-res" capture modes, with image sizes of 640x480 and 640x512.

I'm including the leather case, which was purchased separately from the camera. Other accessories include: 4-Meg SmartMedia card, lens cap, serial cable (for transferring photos), and instructions book. Asking price \$200.

Contact JJ

jj1450xl@ix.netcom.com

Voice: 847.623-3815

Classified Ads

This could be your spot for a classified ad. If you are looking for an item or have something for sale, send the information to lcace@inf-net.com. Members receive this service for **FREE. Private advertisers please contact the News Journal Editor for price quotes.**

SOHO SCANNER TIPS

Small office and home office (SOHO) scanners now range in cost between \$99 and \$300. Some analysts say prices won't go any lower than this because manufacturers are nearing the point at which they would be selling the scanners at cost. Thus, if you do shop now for a scanner, you don't need to fear seeing your product available in a few weeks for less money.

First, in the Wintel world (as opposed to the Apple Computer world), IEEE 1394 (or FireWire) interface products are just starting to appear--Epson's Expression 1600 Professional FireWire model is just one example. You'll pay hundreds of dollars more for these front runners and only gain a little in performance. For the best savings, stick with USB and SCSI scanners.

You can still find sheet-fed scanners on the market. These small-footprint units consume a minimum of desk space by drawing your document or photo across the scan heads on rollers. Unfortunately, even after all these years, no manufacturer has perfected this technique. Your scanner will still occasionally crumple or jam documents if it has a sheet-fed design.

The good news is that flatbed scanners have come a long way. They are now fairly compact--much smaller than before--and most fit neatly on an average-size desk along with a monitor, keyboard, and mouse. Unless desk space is your most critical issue, go with a flatbed scanner.

The newest scanners offer more impressive specifications for color depth than past models. Now you'll see listings like 48-bit color rather than the traditional 24-bit.

Don't put too much weight on these color depth specifications unless you are a graphics professional. In some cases you actually get an off-color image when the scanner and software go through their enhanced color depth interpolation. And consumer-level image editors often don't know what to do with the additional color data and the large files that result from a high color depth setting.

Peruse the software packages that come with any scanner you consider buying. Many SOHO scanners feature a whole range of software. Consider your level of interest in publishing images on the Web, creating your own business cards, kids' projects, and OCR (optical character recognition, which converts an image into a word processor-ready document). Then look for a scanner software bundle that meets your needs.

Don't hesitate to investigate and adjust the settings of your scanning software: brightness, contrast, saturation and resolution. Most scanners now come with default settings for photographs, documents, newspaper clippings, and so on. However, you may find that adjusting these settings up or down will give you higher quality and faster scans. In scanner settings, you can't please everyone, so adjust your scanner's settings to your work. If you get into trouble, just look for a Restore Default Settings button--most packages feature it. You might also find a programmable button on your model that lets you perform a task you can customize with just the touch of a button.

WINDOWS ME HARDWARE TIPS

from Tipworld.com

Microsoft's new home-oriented operating system, Windows ME, is expected to ship in September. If you're upgrading from Windows 98 or 95, expect to spend \$109. If you're installing fresh over some other operating system, it will cost you \$209. And, currently Microsoft is offering a preorder price of \$59.

First things first. Double-check the minimum system requirements, available on Microsoft's Web site. While a basic installation only requires 32MB of RAM, you'll need a minimum of 64MB if you plan to install the new Windows Movie Maker home movie editing software included on the disk. Get more info at:

<http://microsoft.com/windowsme/default.asp>

(Continued on page 8 - Windows ME)

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October 15, 2000

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We will have Certified A+ Technicians at the show who will help people as personal shoppers and take them around the show and make recommendations for what they are looking to purchase. Buyers can also have their products installed and/or tested by the technicians FREE of charge at the show.

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(Continued from page 1 - USB 2.0)

ready.

However, in the world of Apple Computer products like the iMac, both Firewire and USB ports are available. Currently, for best performance, a Firewire interface would be the correct choice, as USB 2.0 systems won't come out until the end of the year. After that, you'll likely have an interface choice for many products.

If you currently use USB peripherals on your PC, you should probably keep up to date on the latest happenings on the USB 2.0 front. One good source of information is the USB Implementors Forum Web site at

<http://www.usb.org>

Here you'll find the latest USB news items and product information. You'll also find the dates, locations, and agendas of the latest USB-related computer conferences.

(Continued from page 6 - Windows ME)

Windows ME includes a new version of the Windows Media Player (version 7, to be exact). The Media Player now works almost like a home entertainment system and can play Web radio broadcasts, act like a jukebox, and manage all your MP3 audio files.

Here's the catch: The Media Player software requires that you have at least 1GB of storage free on your PC's hard drive--more than three times the amount of free disk space a basic Windows ME installation requires. Clear off all the junk on your hard drive now if you plan to make this upgrade.

Windows ME lets you preview images from certain digital cameras without having to download the images to your PC. Here's the catch: You must have a digital camera certified for compatibility with Windows Image Acquisition (WIA). Theoretically, digital cameras with this capability should be available in September. The digital camera's box and documentation should clearly state whether it has this feature.

Note: Other digital cameras will still work with Windows ME--they just won't have the preview-before-download feature.

Windows ME will offer a new Home Networking Wizard to step you through the process of setting up a peer-to-peer home network. Thankfully, the other computers on your home network do not have to be running Windows ME--they can use Windows 95 or Windows 98.

If you currently own home networking gear, you should check with the product's company about compatibility issues with Windows ME before you upgrade.

Windows ME comes with a new built-in System Restore feature, which brings an unstable system back to an earlier functional state. Windows ME also offers an emergency disk capability similar to that of Windows 9x operating systems. Nonetheless, nothing takes the place of a good backup. In fact, you should perform a complete system backup before you begin the operating system upgrade process. Do not rely on the Windows ME tools to restore your system completely if you get into trouble.

Cookie Jar

Cookies are those little notes that Web sites leave behind on your hard drive, typically either to help you sign on more easily the next time -- with the site recognizing and customizing to you -- or to snoop on what you're viewing and where you go online. Many cookies do both. If you want to look at your cookies, in Netscape Communicator you'll find them as a text file in the Communicator folder, simply titled Cookies. In Internet Explorer they're either in Windows/Cookies or in Windows/Profiles/UserName/Cookies.

If you have an article for the News Journal, please forward it to the News Journal Editor at

corky@foxvalley.net

or

lcace@inf-net.com

or deliver the article on disk to one of the officers at the Meetings.

Windows 95 Tips

Defragmenting Floppies

The Disk Defragmenter utility is often used to reorganize the hard drive so that it can hold more and perform better. Few realize that you can also use Disk Defragmenter on floppy disks. There's no reason to defragment a floppy if it doesn't get much use. But if the floppy has been recorded and re-recorded many times, it could benefit from defragmentation. Defragmenting the floppy can help improve the time it takes to find and transmit data.

REGAIN 7 MB OF HARD DISK SPACE

Looking for ways to free up hard disk space? You can free 7 megabytes' worth by deleting the video clips in the Windows 95 Help folder. (They're for novice users only.)

Select Start, Find, Files Or Folders. Click the Browse button, navigate your way to the C:\Windows\Help folder, and click OK. On the Named line, type

***.avi**

then click the Find Now button. Select the first *.avi file, then hold down the Shift key and click the last file. Now press the Delete key on your keyboard (and if necessary, click Yes to confirm).

Interface Interrupt Interference

Two serial ports are good, four serial ports are better -- at least, better for the chance to connect more serial devices. The problem is that more serial ports means more interrupt confusion. IRQ3 is for COM2 and COM4. IRQ4 is for COM1 and COM3. A serial mouse on COM1 will also reserve IRQ1 for itself. If you connect all of those serial interfaces, you may run into interference between the interrupts. Use fewer serial connections or tease out the conflicts using the Control Panel for the System.

COPY IE FAVORITES TO ANOTHER PC

Need to use your Internet Explorer Favorites on another system? Send them on over.

Either copy the contents of your Favorites folder to a floppy disk or email them to yourself; then copy them to the same location on the second PC. Regardless of your Internet Explorer version, you'll find your Favorites folder in the Windows folder. It's that simple.

Can't Undo Control Panel

The Control Panel is powerful. Very powerful. Especially because you can't use any sort of Undo command. Change a setting for the display, keyboard, mouse, or some other element of your Windows system, and you may not be able to change back. Oh, in many cases you can -- simply by returning to the Control Panel and choosing the default or previous setting. But in some cases, the Control Panel changes you make may prevent you from returning, such as if you change the display so that it doesn't show the necessary buttons and menus onscreen.

END TASK TO RECOVER FROM LOCKUP

If you use Windows 95, your system is going to lock up. Period. While we can't tell you how to resolve every issue, we can offer a tip that might get you back to work without rebooting. Try ending the current task and see if that solves the problem.

Assuming you're frozen, press Ctrl-Alt-Delete to open the Close Program dialog box. Select the task that caused the problem (it should say "not responding" in parentheses) and click the End Task button. After a few seconds, an End Task dialog box will appear, explaining that the program is not responding. Click End Task again, and with any luck, Windows will close just that program. (Note: If pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete does absolutely nothing, or if trying to end a task results in a total lockup, it's time to reboot.)

WINDOWS 98 TIPS

DEFRAGMENTING YOUR HARD DRIVE AUTOMATICALLY

Defragmenting your hard drive is one of the best and easiest ways to keep your computer running at peak performance, but who has the time? Defragmenting, after all, takes a while, especially in these days of multi-gig hard drives. And while the Defragmenter can run in the background while you're working, this slows performance. Your best bet for defragmenting your hard drive is to perform the action automatically on a weekly basis using Microsoft's Task Scheduler.

To set up a weekly defrag session, go to Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and choose Scheduled Tasks (if you have Task Scheduler running in your System Tray, you can just double-click that). Double-click Add Scheduled Task and click Next. Choose Disk Defragmenter from the list of programs, and click Next. Select the frequency with which you want to run the program, click Next, and then choose the day and time. As long as you leave your computer on all the time, set the Defragmenter to operate during the night, while you're sleeping.

NEW HARD DRIVE ICON

How can you change the name of your hard drive?

To change the name of any drive on your system, open a My Computer window, right-click the drive's icon, and select Properties. In the text box next to Label, type a new name of up to 11 characters, then click OK.

Is your membership up to date? Check with the Membership Chairperson, Donna Bell, to find out what your status is. Contact her at 815 344-1271 after 7:30pm daily or send E-Mail to: lcace@inf-net.com to be kept informed.

MINIMIZE WINDOW USING KEYBOARD

Have you ever clicked the "X" caption button by mistake, when you intended to minimize a window but not to close it? Talk about frustrating! If you tend to be a little click happy, stick with the keyboard: Press Alt-Spacebar, then press N to send the active window to the Taskbar.

DRAGGING FILES TO THE START MENU

The Start menu is a great place to keep your most frequently accessed programs and files, and it's the first place a seasoned Windows user goes when looking for something. Seeing how the Start menu is so frequently accessed, it's fortunate that adding any sort of file to this menu is simple: Just drag the file and drop it on the Start button to create a Start menu shortcut. Doing this adds the file to the top of the Start menu, way up there somewhere above your Windows Update icon. But you can move the file wherever you wish. Just click the Start menu, move your mouse to the new icon, grab it, and drag and drop it anywhere else on the Start menu.

CHANGING THE DRIVE FOR VIRTUAL MEMORY

If you have more than one hard drive on your computer, you probably want Windows 98 to use the faster drive for its virtual memory capabilities. Having a faster drive for virtual memory can speed performance by decreasing the time needed to access temporarily stored information.

To change this setting, go to Start, Settings, Control Panel, System. Click the Performance tab and then the Virtual Memory button. Check the Let Me Specify My Own Virtual Memory Settings and choose the new drive from the Hard Disk pull-down menu. When you finish, click OK.

The PRESIDENT's RAM

Good day everyone. I would like to start by apologizing to all of those members who showed up for the September meeting only to find the building not opened. I had been assigned to a baseball game in Morris, Illinois and Mike McEnery had all the information to conduct the meeting. However, after dropping me off in Morris, Donna was returning to open the hall when she experienced car problems south of Huntley, Illinois. She was able to get the car towed to a service station. During this time JJ did call our home and left a message on the pager, however he didn't leave a number and Donna had no way to contact him or anyone at the hall area to let them know what was going on. She also did not know if they had remained or left, and being that the time was close to 1:30pm, she selected not to attempt contacting the Township Supervisor to have him or one of his people open the building. Anyway, I am sorry this happened and that the meeting was held outside. From what I understand it was a very productive meeting.

A Prize Committee was coordinated to work on the Annual Christmas Party Raffle. The party plans are off to a good start. I reserved the location last January and the event will be held once again at the University of Illinois Auditorium in Grayslake, Illinois next to the Lake County Fairgrounds. We will once again be conducting a couple of raffles with the main raffle having three major prizes. The Third Place Prize will be a one Year Membership to L.C.A.C.E., the Second Place Prize will be an Astra 3400 Scanner.



The First Place Prize will be an Olympus D-490 Zoom Digital Camera.



The tickets for this raffle will be \$1 each or 6 for \$5. They should be available at the next meeting for those members wishing to sell them. We will also have them on sale at the Expo.

And speaking of the Expo, remember that the Expo staff has changed the dates and location of their show. This month's date is October 15th and the new location is the Main Ballroom of the Gurnee Holiday Inn, 6161 W. Grand Avenue in Gurnee, Illinois (directly across from Gurnee Mills). Upcoming shows are November 5th and December 3rd. Come on out and see the "NEW" show. The Expo staff has assured me that L.C.A.C.E. will be able to have a booth there.

That's all for this month Please remember the October 14th meeting is at the Grant Township Meeting Hall. I hope to see everyone there. Until then Good Computing to All.

Corky Bell

Next Meeting!!!

L.C.A.C.E Online

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www.inf-net.com/lcace

CLUB PHOTOS

www.easyphoto.com/lcace

- ◆ LCACE E-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE information,
- ◆ LCACE history and pictures
- ◆ LCACE meeting location and map
- ◆ LCACE members e-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE online membership application

October 14, 2000

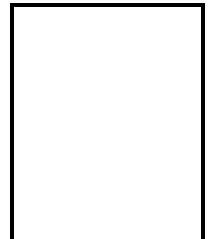
**Grant Township Meeting Hall
411 S. Washington Avenue
Ingleside, IL 60041**

12:00pm - 2:00 p.m.

This month's presentation is

L.C.A.C.E

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts
5414 W. Westshore Drive
McHenry, IL 60050



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