



Exploring Microsoft Windows 7

Beta 1, Part 1 - A Little Background on My Early (Mis) Adventures with Windows 7

Written by Lee Reynolds, a member of the Boca Raton Computer Society, FL

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Lee gives an overview of what the new operating system might look like, as well as what it is likely to have for features.

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Probably most of you know Windows 7 is Microsoft's latest and greatest offering in terms of operating systems. A public beta download was made available on January 9th, intended for testing purposes. This beta version will stop working on August 1st.

The official final version is planned for introduction late this year or early next year (depending upon who is making the prediction; nobody knows for sure.) You may still be able to download the beta from this website:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/betadownload.aspx>

BETA DOWNLOAD

A couple of days before Microsoft made available its public download of the next version of Windows, I downloaded a version available through MSDN (the Microsoft Developers Network), intending to install it as

a virtual machine on my Windows Vista desktop computer. With my slo-o-o-ow DSL connection, I had to wait over 5 hours to get it loaded onto my hard drive. (It is about a 2.5 gigabyte file.)

VIRTUAL PC INSTALLATION

Then I installed it as a virtual OS, using a copy of Microsoft's free program Virtual Pc 2007, that I have been using for the past two years to get access to and test other operating systems.

The installation process itself for Windows 7 took over two and half hours! Next, when I tried it out, the load was extremely unstable. I kept getting a popup message saying that Windows Search Indexer had stopped working; this message would appear just about every couple of minutes.

When trying out the new beta Internet Explorer 8 built into the operating system, it seems just about every web page I looked at would crash, and Internet Explorer would restart, and try to recover the web page. In addition, I couldn't download an anti-virus program so as to get rid of the security message popup from the taskbar complaining about no anti-virus program being present.

STABILITY PROBLEM

What was wrong? I had previously read a number of articles about Windows 7 that raved about the unparalleled stability of the Windows 7 beta.

This didn't seem to be true in my case! I recalled that the computer had lost power during my 5 hour download about halfway through, when Florida Plunder and Loot (sorry, I mean Florida Power and Light, of course) had one of its all-too-frequent blackouts.

The download had appeared to resume okay when I restarted the computer, but maybe there was something wrong with the file when it completed. So I

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Membership in LCACE 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 *LCACE 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 are now available on our web site at - <http://www.lcace.org>.

Meetings

LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. 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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Relay For Life 2009

2009 is the 25th Anniversary of The American Cancer Society's Relay For Life. It's also been 3 1/2 years since I was diagnosed with lung cancer. I'm alive today and happy to say, "I am a Survivor!" My daughter's family formed the "Donna's Day" team shortly after I had part of my lung removed, while I was still sick and bald from the chemotherapy. Each year our team continues to raise funds for the Cancer Society in gratitude for all they did for me.

This year's Relay For Life will be overnight (6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.), July 25th and July 26th, 2009 on Saturday night and Sunday morning. We will be at the Lake Villa Township Park, commonly known as "Caboose Park," located at Grand Avenue and Fairfield Roads in Lake Villa. Please join us. It's so much fun. I can guarantee you will smile, laugh and perhaps shed a tear or two.

Now that it's income tax time, perhaps you're thinking of tax deductions. My fellow L.C.A.C.E. members, I think I can help you out for next year..... Please donate and help my team meet our fundraising goal. Make your tax deductible checks payable to The American Cancer

Society and mail them to me. (I encourage checks rather than on-line deductions.) Feel free to pass on this message to everyone you know. Thank you and may you NEVER have to hear the words: "You have cancer."

Donna Lee Kalinoski
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Robin's RAMblings

Thirty members and guests celebrated the 26th anniversary of Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts at our April 4, 2009 meeting. The busy Saturday was highlighted by a party with birthday cake, fresh fruit, coffee, and birthday signs. Linda Busch brought jelly beans in memory of Mr. "G" (Lawrence Grauzas, senior) who always gave jelly beans to the ladies. Thank you Winnie, Linda, Lew, and Mike for all your hard work preparing for and setting up the party.

Robert Carmichael of Gurnee and Ken Savage were guests. Bill Ditman, Lake Zurich, Jay Bitterman and Betsy Alleman, Waukegan, Robert D'Agostino, Grayslake, and Henry Henriksen of Kenosha renewed their memberships. Bobby Jacobs, Highland Park, joined. Welcome to LCACE!

Tammy Gauger won \$17.50 in our 50/50 raffle. Bob D'Agostino and Betsy Alleman were happy winners of one year subscriptions to *Smart Computing Magazine*; Robert Carmichael won the Logitech wireless keyboard/mouse.

Donna Kalinoski ably conducted the election of the board and president. LCACE officers until April, 2010 are:

Robin B. Seidenberg-president
Mike McEnergy-vice president/newsletter editor
Winnie Frost-treasurer
Linda Busch-secretary
Terri Hanlon-program chair
Sherry Florian-membership chair
Lester Larkin-public relations/webmaster

Julio Rivera has agreed to serve as our club historian (historian@lcase.org).

Webmaster/publicity chair, Lester Larkin, discussed "Magic Jack", a gadget for making internet phone calls. Fred Barnett told us about Google411, and explained how Google groups work. Lester and Fred, thank you! Our gurus then answered questions. This is always my favorite part of the meeting.

Our upcoming meetings are:

May 9-Best Buy-Mundelein will return to talk about the latest in technology

June 13-Skeletons in our Closet: Researching a Family Scandal-Robin Seidenberg

August 8-Digital Photography

September 12-Show and Tell, and Ask the Gurus

October 10-Webcams

November-Genealogy-Terri Hanlon

December-Holiday party

We are a volunteer organization. If you have a new "toy", bring it to Show and Tell, and/or write a short article about it for the *News Journal*.

Would you like to see a special program? Please email Terri Hanlon at programs@lcase.org with your ideas.

If you have ideas for improving our club, please write me at president@lcase.org.

When shopping over the internet, remember that shipping charges may well wipe out any savings. Before hitting the "buy" button, go to www.freeshipping.org to see if they list a code to receive free shipping. They claim to have free shipping codes for 1375 stores.

Go bargain hunting at www.dealnews.com. They list budget online tech services (for warranties, tech support, photo scanning and touch up) that can help save money at <http://dealnews.com/features/Budget-online-services-Warranties-PC-repair-more/272469.html>.

If you are seeking something for nothing (or at a very low price), check out www.freeafterrebate.info.

Have you accidentally deleted your digital photos? George LeClaire, staff photographer of the *Daily Herald*, recently spoke about *Image Rescue* (http://www.lexar.com/software/image_rescue3.html), designed to recover lost or deleted files from any type or brand of memory card, using any card reader; it lists under \$30. Let's hope you never need it!

Happy computing!

"Members helping members"

by Robin B. Seidenberg

Our club motto is "Members helping members". I cannot count the times that J.J. and Mike McEnery have saved us from tech disaster. Fred Barnett has helped me through many computer problems-on New Year's Day and recently via long distance.

At last month's meeting, our new membership chair, Sherry Florian, mentioned contacting the "retention department" to get a better buy on internet service. Bill Hamilton wanted to know more about this. Sherry helped get Bill a much better deal than he previously had.

Thank you, everyone, for helping! Remember we're all here for each other.



From the Editor:

I would like to welcome aboard a new member of the *News Journal* staff. Julio Rivera has volunteered to become the new L.C.A.C.E. historian. He will be writing a small synopsis of the meetings and taking pictures.

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downloaded the public beta (another 5 hours of twiddling my thumbs and cursing) and then tried again. Before I started installing the new load in Virtual PC 2007, I researched the problem I had with the previous load; by googling the net, I found the answer, on this web page:

<http://msdnrss.thecoderblogs.com/2009/01/11/installingthe-windows-7-beta-with-virtual-pc-2007-sp1/>

The problem was that I had used the initial version of Virtual PC 2007 (which worked perfectly well with all my other virtual Oses, including XP Home, XP Pro, and Vista Home Premium), but the above article said installing Windows 7 as a guest OS required the version with its Service Pack 1 built in. I was gratified to see that after I upgraded my version of VPC 2007, the installation of Windows 7 Beta went very smoothly and only took half an hour. All the crashes of Windows 7 disappeared, too.

ABOUT MICROSOFT VIRTUAL PC 2007

Microsoft Virtual PC 2007 is a free download available from Microsoft; it is the first version of this program that is compatible with Windows Vista as well as Windows XP. An overview of its features is presented here:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/winfamily/virtualpc/overview.mspx>

Microsoft Virtual Pc 2007 Product Information
MS Virtual PC 2007 is available in both 32-bit and 64-bit versions, and works with Windows Vista Business, Enterprise, and Ultimate editions, as well as Windows Server 2003, Windows XP Professional, and Windows XP Tablet Edition.

(When you try to install VPC 2007 on a Vista Home Premium pc, it will give you a warning about not being compatible, but I have seen web pages on the internet from people who have said it works perfectly well with that version of Vista, and I also have a friend in our computer club who has done it successfully.)

With Virtual PC 2007, you have the program installed in your main OS (Operating System), called the "host OS", and as many virtual machines (each with possibly a different OS) as you can comfortably handle with your amount of memory and disk storage.

Each virtual machine is called a "guest OS." You can pause any guest OS virtual machine so that it doesn't

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use CPU cycles, and you can save and restore the configuration file at any time.

With the Virtual Machine Additions installed, you can copy and paste, and drag and drop between the host and guest OS.

Each guest OS will be able to handle any CD or DVD drive on the computer, and you can set it up to be able to access other hard drive partitions. The guest OS can also access the internet through a web browser. With the current version of VPC, the guest unfortunately cannot access any USB devices like printers, flash drives, or external USB drives. (It does handle keyboards and mice connected by USB, however.)

I decided two years ago I would download MS Virtual PC 2007 and try using it to choose between Vista and XP Pro. This is much more convenient than dual booting the two Windows versions, because they are run simultaneously on my computer, and only need to click on an icon in the Notification Area (formerly called the System Tray) of Vista, to switch to XP.

This allows instantaneous switching, rather than what multi-booting requires, which is to restart the computer and wait for the several minutes necessary to boot to another operating system.

The current version of Virtual PC 2007, with SP1, can be downloaded for free from here: <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=28C97D22-6EB8-4A09-A7F7-F6C7A1F000B5&displaylang=en>

SOUND PROBLEM

My next problem was that the sound didn't work in the Windows 7 guest OS. I turned to my old friend Google and found this page:

http://blogs.msdn.com/virtual_pc_guy/archive/2009/01/13/windows-7-on-virtual-pc-nwindows-7.aspx

A person calling himself Hermes had encountered my problem and found a solution which he detailed in a comment he posted in the Virtual PC Guy's weblog January 17.

I tried his solution, and it worked

GRAPHICS PROBLEM

I was happily exploring the new features of Windows 7 for several days. Then...

A new problem developed from the fact that Microsoft hasn't upgraded its graphics driver for Virtual PC 2007 since introduction of the program two years ago. Of course, the guest operating system actually uses your host machine's real CRT, or LCD screen for display, but it emulates a driver for a graphics card described as S3 Trio 32/64 PCI with 8 MB Video RAM.

This is a very old graphics adaptor. It barely supports some of the "Aero" effects of Vista and Windows 7, and it doesn't support the requirements of Windows Media Center or Windows Media Player.

VIRTUAL PC 2007 TO DUAL BOOT

I really wanted to explore those aspects of the new OS. So I decided I would quit using Windows 7 as a virtual machine and instead install it as a real operating system on another partition of my hard drive.

Since I had all my virtual machines stored already on a separate partition, and had previously backed them up to an external USB hard drive, I wiped this out and used my Windows 7 Beta installation DVD to install it there.

Then I could dual boot with Vista and Windows 7, which was nowhere near as convenient as running them simultaneously, but apparently was necessary in order to continue my investigations of the new OS.

Future articles regarding the Windows 7 Beta, will contain explanations of what I have discovered about Windows 7, including some screenshot illustrations.



The Kindle2 May Make Newspapers Obsolete

Written by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
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Every now and then a revolutionary new product comes along at a time when it is most needed. So it is with the just released Kindle2 wireless reading device, fondly called an e-book reader.

Up to now, electronic book readers have been very slow in taking off. Sony has had a book reading device for several years. Last year Amazon came out with the first version of the Kindle, which was impressive and fairly popular, but had a few drawbacks.

Now, however, the time for these devices may have finally come. At 8" x 5.3" the Kindle2 is about the size of a paperback. At about 1/3" thick, it's thin but strong. In this second iteration, Amazon has corrected the design flaws of the original Kindle. It is now easy to use. The e-ink technology allows you to read the words on the Kindle just as you would read a book, with no eye strain or glare. You can adjust the size of the text to your liking. To turn the page you simply press a button. The reader even lets you read several books at once, always returning you to just where you left off. You can look up any word with the built-in dictionary. You can underline words and add your own notes to the pages. This Kindle will even read the text of most books to you. So if you are engrossed in a book on the Kindle and need to pick up the kids, you can take the Kindle along and have it read to you in the car.

The best part of the Kindle, however, is the reading material and how it is delivered. The Kindle2 can hold more than 1,500 books. You can choose from over 240,000 books in the Kindle's Amazon store. Most of the books are priced at \$9.99. You can also subscribe to newspapers and magazines on the Kindle. The

books, newspapers, and magazines are downloaded directly to the device over a free cellular network. I drove down a rural highway in North Carolina and downloaded a book and was reading it in less than five minutes. Better yet would be sitting on a beach and downloading a romance novel. In any case, the Kindle is ultimately useable. The biggest drawback for the Kindle right now is the price. At \$359, the Kindle is pretty expensive.

But if you are you ready to watch the ebook market explode, stick around for awhile. The Kindle2 has appeared on the horizon just as the economy is slumping. There are many hard-hit business sectors, but the newspaper and magazine industry is already showing signs of cracking. CNN reports that many major newspapers are struggling including the San Francisco Chronicle, the Chicago Sun-Times, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, and the Miami Herald. Certainly online versions of newspapers and magazines are an alternative, but up to this point very few newspapers or magazines have been able to support themselves with online subscriptions and/or advertising.

As the print industry is looking for ways to cut costs, ebook readers may be an answer. If there were no print costs, perhaps large newspapers would be able to provide e-book readers to subscribers as part of the subscription costs or at least at a highly reduced rate. If the electronic device were done well enough, it could mimic the printed version

and be filled with ads just like the print newspapers and magazines. Normally I would expect that this type of transition would take a few years, but the economic woes may put a rush on this type of move. The Hearst Corp., one of the largest publishers, is already planning to launch its own wireless e-book reader. Most are speculating that this would be a device with a larger screen that would more closely imitate the newspaper and magazine reading experience. Hearst, who is a mega-publisher, would be in a great position to create the liaisons needed to make this type of device and its content work. Fortune reports that the Hearst device will be available sometime this year.

There is no doubt that we live in a world that is changing because of technology and this type of technology may be in your hands sooner than you think.



APRIL MEETING IN PICTURES



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TIME TO RENEW

All memberships are now renewable annually on April 1st. This change in the payment of annual dues will allow the treasurer to budget our money more closely. If you have not already renewed your membership, please see Sherry Florian or Winnie Frost.

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NEXT MEETING
May 9, 2009
Grayslake Area Public Library
at 12:30 pm.

June 13, 2009

SKELETONS IN OUR CLOSETS:
RESEARCHING A FAMILY SCANDAL

Presented by
L.C.A.C.E. President Robin Seidenberg

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts
409 S. Elmwood Avenue
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