

Welcome to the first on-line delivered edition of the TekJournal. I use Adobe InDesign version 2.0.1 to create the newsletter which allows me to convert it to a PDF format for distribution. This is the first issue which has hyperlinks so you can access content without having to type the address into your browser manually. The links are identified by a blue box surrounding the address.

I NEED YOUR HELP. Deciding on the content of the newsletter requires a commitment of about 12 to 20 hours each week since I don't have any outside help. The most demanding areas where I need your help are the TekQuestions and Surf's Up. Up to now I have been drawing on past service calls and my own resources for what to include as Questions. As for surfing the Net, I have been including places that have been of interest to me that I am hoping you enjoy. Surely you have found other sites that may benefit other users. Please send them to me. As for questions, simple things like "What is WinZip and why do I need it?" or "Do I need Acrobat Reader?" or "What is a mailing list and how do I set one up?" are example of questions that will help future issues. Please send all questions and Internet sites to [tekjournal@mbts.mb.ca](mailto:tekjournal@mbts.mb.ca) (unfortunately I haven't yet figured out how to add an E-mail link to this document so please E-mail me manually).

## BITS, BYTES, AND NIBBLES

Are you a "Star Trek" junkie? If you are, tune into eBay Thursday June 27 for a chance to bid on Captain Kirk's chair from the bridge of the Enterprise. This is only one of the some 374 mostly "Star Trek" related lots that will be added that day.

Prices continue to fall for processors, memory, and most components, however in some cases where popularity due to falling prices has been renewed, prices has started to rise. AMD's mobile Athlon processors have risen slightly in price, as have the higher end XP processors. High end Intel processors, P4 2.4+ GHz have also risen in cost recently.

Attempting to find an alternative for the serial port in computers, manufacturers and designers have been working with USB and Firewire. USB allowed up to 127 devices, while Firewire gave incredible speed. USB 2.0 matches or exceeds the speed available from Firewire. Which one is dominant? With USB 2.0 being 20% faster than Firewire, more cost effective to implement, and the fact that most new motherboards come with from two to six USB 2.0 ports installed at the factory, USB 2.0 looks like the long term winner. Firewire technology claims it will transfer data at double its current rate by December 2002. There is no clear winner yet...

## TEKQUESTIONS

### **What is a Zip file?**

A Zip file is a compressed archive of one or more files. The reason for compressing a file is to make it smaller and therefore easier to transport between users. This was a really important method employed when we could only use floppy diskettes for saving and transporting files, but has been resurrected with the upswing in E-mail for transferring information between people via the Internet. The larger the file, the longer it takes to send and receive that file via E-mail based on your connection speed.

### **How is a file compressed?**

The most popular utility available today is WinZip version 8.1, available at <http://www.winzip.com/> The method used is a mathematical algorithm that strips out redundant characters, spaces, and groups of characters from an existing file. (It also includes the algorithm in the zip file format so it can be expanded back to it's original format).

### **How do I use WinZip?**

After downloading the program, double click on the WinZip 8.1 circular icon to install the program. Installation adds an icon to your desktop (which can be deleted), as well as the Windows Start Menu. It also adds a function to the Right Click menu when you are accessing files via the Desktop or Windows Explorer. Once it is installed it is ready for use. Open Windows Explorer and select a file, or range of files, to compress. Once you have highlighted the desired files, use the right mouse button to bring up the context menu and select the option labelled WinZip. The WinZip option will produce it's own menu offering choices including Add to Zip file... where you can give the file a name of your choosing, Add to filename.zip where filename is the name of the first file selected, Add to recently used zip file where this would be the last file created using WinZip, and Zip and E-mail the resultant file using your E-mail client. For simplicity we will use the first option, Add to Zip file... This option pops up a windows that asks you to identify the destination on your hard drive (or floppy

drive) where the file will reside, and the name of the zip file to create. The default will be the name of the first file selected and the directory in which the file resides. If you ultimately want the file on a floppy diskette, it will always be faster to zip the file to your hard drive and then copy or move the file to a floppy diskette. Once you have decided on a name for the file, type it into the area identified as Add to Archive: All that is left is clicking the Add button and waiting for the process to finish. Optionally you can add a password to the created zip file so that only those with the password can unzip it later. The biggest problem with password protecting your archive is that if you forget the password, the archive is lost. Passwords are not recoverable.

#### **Are there other programs used for compressing files?**

Yes. Like all good things, after one is accepted, everyone tries to build a better one. So there are quite a few alternatives to WinZip including Stuff-It <http://www.stuffit.com/> 21st Century Easy Zip [http://www.21stsoftware.com/home\\_office/eazy\\_zip\\_trial.htm](http://www.21stsoftware.com/home_office/eazy_zip_trial.htm) File Wrangler [http://www.cursorarts.com/ca\\_fw.html](http://www.cursorarts.com/ca_fw.html) and probably the most popular alternative WinRar <http://www.rarlab.com/>

### SURF'S UP

With increased virus activity attacking E-mail more often, and getting smarter in that not all E-mail must be opened to activate the virus, this program may be the next step at avoiding the problem. If you could check your E-mail before you download it, the virus problem would never reach your personal system. CheckP3 monitors your ISP's E-mail server for new mail for you, and allows you to preview, and dispose of, E-mail before you actually download it. Download the program from <http://www.andreamarangoni.it/>

Did you know that Winnipeg had a Business Card Directory? It can be viewed at <http://www.dctech.com/winnipeg/list.html> and was setup to enable Winnipeg businesses to be found on-line even if they didn't have their own web site. The e-cards are **free** and your business card with links to search engines has a minimal annual cost. You can also include a map so walk in traffic can be lead to your door.

### TIPS & TWEAKS

#### **Windows 9x & Me**

You too can tweak your system for better performance without having a background in computer science. Everything that functions on a computer uses memory, so it only makes sense that the less stuff you have running the less memory your system will use. **But what can be eliminated?** Begin by running the configuration utility - *Start -> Run -> msconfig* : Now, if you do not run any DOS based programs on your Windows computer click on the Config.sys tab and remove any checkmarks in little boxes that you see. Next do the same for Autoexec.bat. This tells the system not to run any of these programs when Windows starts. These programs are generally not required and only consume valuable memory resources that could be better used elsewhere. The last step is to click the Startup tab. Here is where all the programs that Windows thinks it needs are identified. The files that must be left in this area include: ScanRegistry, TaskMonitor, and System-Tray. Load PowerProfile may be present depending on your system and should be left checked. Depending on the additional programs here are some additional files that may be checked relate to **AntiVirus** - path will identify McAfee, Symantec, Pc-Cillin, etc, **Firewall** - path will identify ZoneAlarm, Symantec, McAfee, etc, **CD Writer** - the path may include Nero, Adaptec, Roxio, etc, **QuickbooksDelivery Agent** - this program checks for updates while Quickbooks is connected to the Internet, otherwise it just wastes memory, anything to do with **Microsoft Office** can be turned off, and **FastFind** can be turned off as it wastes a great deal of memory indexing all the material on your hard drive. This should free up memory in your system by 10 to 40 percent and give you a somewhat noticeable speed increase.

#### **Windows XP Tip**

In Windows XP the default font used everywhere is MS Sans Serif or Microsoft Sans Serif. If you don't like this font and want Technical, or Tahoma, or Verdana, or whatever, here is how you change it to your preference. *Start -> Run -> Regedit* and follow your way to HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE \ SOFTWARE \ Microsoft \ Windows NT \ CurrentVersion \ FontSubstitutes. Double-click the **MS Shell Dlg entry**. Change it to whatever you want your font to see "everywhere." By default, the System will go with either "Microsoft Sans Serif" or "MS Sans Serif." Reboot and you're set.

\*We take no responsibility for the operation of your system for any modifications made to the registry. Before modifying the systems registry always make a backup copy you can restore from.

### VIRUS ALERTZ

Surfing the Internet without proper Antivirus protection is like driving a race car without a seatbelt and helmet. Viruses get everyone eventually, it's just a matter of time. Here are the latest threats to watch out for courtesy of Symantec.

**W32.HLLW.Kazmor** a worm with backdoor trojan capability allowing a hacker to gain control of your system. It was discovered June 20 and fixed June 21. Disguised as movies, games, or porno related material.

**Backdoor.NetControle** is a trojan giving a hacker control of your system Discovered June 20, may be identified as Backdoor.Trojan virus by existing definitions file.

**W32.Kwbot.Worm** has a backdoor trojan capability which allows a hacker to gain control of your system. This worm will update itself by checking the Internet for newer versions. Discovered June 18, Fixed 19th.

**W32.Yaha.D@mm, W32.Yaha.E@mm, W32.Yaha.F@mm, W32.Yaha.G@mm** Variations of a mass mailing worm that sends itself to all addresses in the Windows Address Book, MSN Messenger List, Yahoo Pager List, ICQ Contact List, and addresses it finds in files with an extension that begins with .ht. The attachment will have a .bat, .scr, or .pif extension. Discovered June 17, Fixed 18th. This worm will also attempt to terminate AntiVirus and Firewall processes.

**Bat.Beckow.Worm** is a worm that propagates through IRC. It also attempts to send E-mail to all the addresses in Microsoft Outlook with a subject of "England Win World Cup with Beckham" It also overwrites files with .reg, .vbs, .bat, .ifk, .pif, and .lnk extensions, and inhibits AntiVirus programs. Discovered June 17th, Fixed June 19th.

If your system has become infected with a virus, please call MicroByte TekSolutions immediately for on site service to remove the threat. Unless you have the proper tools, you may damage your system further by performing these procedures yourself. We also supply Norton AntiVirus 2002 for \$ 40.00 plus PST & GST

## INVENTORY CLEARANCE SPECIALS

Currently, the following clearance items available for sale. All products are new (never been used), and come with a full warranty. The computers have been assembled with all new parts and have been tested with Windows 98 Second Edition. Delivery and installation, and a one year parts and labour limited warranty is included with each computer.

Creative Labs Web Cam	\$ 34.95	1 only
25 pc "cakebox" CD Recordable disks	\$ 16.25	3 only
25 pc slim line coloured jewel cases	\$ 8.75	1 only
Logitech Optical Wheel mouse PS/2 & USB	\$ 26.50	1 only
Microsoft Wireless Internet Keyboard & 5 Button Mouse with Scroll Wheel	\$ 84.95	1 only
Labtec AM-222 Stereo Desktop Microphone	\$ 23.95	2 only

**AMD Duron 1GHz** system based on an MSI 6340 Socket A Motherboard with Integrated AGP Video, AC'97 Sound, 256MB PC-133 SDRAM, 56k v.90 Data/Fax/Voice Modem, 52x CD ROM, 20GB Hard Drive, Keyboard, Mouse, Norton AntiVirus 2002, 17 inch Colour Monitor in a Mid Tower case with a 300 watt power supply  
**\$ 1,079.00**

**AMD Athlon 1.4GHz** system based on an Asus A7V133 Socket A Motherboard with Integrated AC'97 Audio, nVidia AGP 2D/3D Graphics Card, 256MB PC-133 SDRAM, 56k v.90 Data/Fax/Voice Modem, 52x CD ROM, 20GB Hard Drive, Keyboard, Mouse, Norton AntiVirus 2002, 17 inch Colour Monitor in a Mid Tower case with a 300 watt power supply **\$ 1,199.00**

PST & GST are extra on all products listed above. All products are new and carry full warranty as determined by manufacturer. Systems are sold without an operating system. Each system has been fully tested with an unlicensed copy of Windows 98SE which has been left on hard drive. All systems have a limited 1 year warranty. Some components may carry extended manufacturers warranty.