

## UNTITLED AS YET

Whenever you have a long string of sleepless nights, you sometimes have the opportunity to surf without abandon. I found myself in this position while in Toronto, even though I would have rather been anywhere else. Anyway, I decided since I won't be publishing a TekJournal for probably a month, this would be a good time to uncover some really neat stuff. Neat stuff usually costs money, but not this time. Almost everything in here is free.

Basically, software has evolved into three different categories: The kind from Microsoft, Symantec, Corel, etc. which can cost quite a bit; Shareware, which is written generally by cottage programmers or real enthusiasts and will end up costing you money; and Freeware, also written by the latter type of programmers, but generally because they love a challenge. There really is some amazing stuff, if you are persistent or know where to look. I'm persistently looking in quite a few of the right places.

Since I am in a bit of a funk, I am going to take editorial license and bypass the usual format, but just this once. All sections normally included will definitely return in the next installment.

## FREWARE FOR ALL

**CD ROM:** How many people remember the original CD ROM drives running at 4x and less? Nice and quiet but if you wanted to copy a whole disk it took forever. Very quickly the developers came out with faster and faster units, but they started to sound like low flying aircraft. Would you believe you can actually damage a disk in a CD ROM drive that spins too quickly? I personally have never seen it happen, but on good authority I have heard that a disk can actually be cracked inside a drive. So what does one do to reduce the noise and change the speed? Surf on over to <http://cdromtool.hopto.org/> and download CD ROM Tool to get the ability to detect speed, change speed and spindown, do drive-locking, and manipulate other controls. All of this for less noise and greater accuracy.

**Web Design:** Designing web pages sounds and looks like a lot of fun. Take it from me, after a brief learning curve, you are only limited by your imagination. Oh, and generally money of course. Dreamweaver MX has a street price of about \$ 1500. Graphics tools are extra. Unless you read the TekJournal. Commercial software still has the same pricetag, but we offer an alternative.

We will start with [HTML Builder XP v5.0 LITE](#) This is a powerful, professional, and easy-to-use development environment for HTML. Some of the features include HTML Syntax Highlighting, Instant Tag Property Editing, Tag Insight Drop Down Helper Lists , Automatic Tag Completion, Complete HTML Tidy Integration, Fast Spell Checker, Thesaurus, integrated document preview, support for external browsers, and much more. It's a very nice package that is well suited for beginners and advanced users alike.

If PHP is more your style, or you're just curious, PHP Triad v2.1.1 may have your answer. PHP Triad installs a complete PHP server environment on Windows platforms. It includes the MySQL database server, the Apache web server, and PHP. It includes everything you need, including a web-based interface for MySQL (PHPMysqlAdmin). All the components are open source and actively developed.

If you don't want to jump directly into Web Design, but still like the idea of laying out what a page will look like, you might try [PagePlus v5.0](#) If you have trouble with the download, which is quite large, there is a free CD if you agree to pay for the shipping.

One area few people ever think about when designing a site, or at least once it is designed and running, is "Can the public always get to my site?" Even if you have the best web hosting company on the planet (I do) your site may be unavailable for brief periods of time due to maintenance or minor glitches. However, it is doubtful any web host would send out a mass mailing to their clients telling that their site(s) were unavailable for a long period of time. Can you monitor this yourself?

YES! Server Alert v1.0 will monitor your web site and notify you in the even it cannot be reached. All attempts are logged for easy reference in evaluating your web host. Security: Our last issue stressed the need for security on your system and the additional need to backup your data. Carrying on in the vein of making sure your system always runs optimally, here are some sites to check out.

[MR Tech Systray v2.1](#) is yet another tweaking tool, but quite often each one identifies different features and therefore may have unique advantages. This one tweaks Windows annoyances for improved performance, cleans the hard drive and browsers, gets system information, and comes with a built-in MP3 toolkit.

[X-Teg](#) This program is labelled as the “Ultimate” in operating system tweaking. It runs on any Windows version, is easy to use, and covers more tweakable areas than any other program available.

[TweakUI](#) - Microsoft, in its infinite wisdom, realizes that not all settings marked as default in a standard Windows installation are acceptable to all users. Therefore, they want us to believe they are first to jump on the bandwagon with a utility to Tweak the settings of the operating system. This useful utility can be found by clicking TWEAKUI

Regseeker - This utility was reviewed in an earlier newsletter, but should be included here. Not only does this utility help keep your systems registry free from detritus which hinders your systems smooth running, but it also has a Tweak section to help tune your system.

One point of interest when dealing with tweaking the system registry using an existing program is that when tweak overlap they must always be reset. For example, if you turn off Active Desktop in one utility, and then install a second utility which allows Active Desktop to be tweaked, it will automatically be (re)set to the last installed programs defaults.

### **Where is the hidden stuff**

Many sites on the Internet allow for the downloading of neat software and information from their storehouses using FTP - File Transfer Protocol. But how do you find this stuff?

[Grim's Ping v1.7.5](#) is a tool that allows its user to “Ping” multiple FTP sites looking for public folders with anonymous access. If the site has anonymous access it should also have upload/download rights for visitors. You never know what you might find... (BE VERY CAREFUL HERE... An autodownload for Gator has recently been attached to this site. Don't get sucked in. Say NO! to Gator and everything like it.)

Once you have uncovered the gem's available using Grim's Ping, you will need an FTP utility program to be able to access the different sites. There are several available, some free, some shareware, and some commercial.

### **No More Temp Files**

As all Internet surfers should know by now, every time we access the web our systems get cluttered with a ton of small files from every site we visit. Back when Internet access was new, instead of common, and the most common access was a 9600 baud modem, it was determined to be beneficial to download and save all the files from each website on your hard drive so subsequent accesses would be faster. Since broadband is now becoming more the norm, we generally don't need this junk cluttering up our hard drives even though the cost of drivespace is also plummeting. For those who want a relatively quick fix, and don't want to use software, open Internet Explorer, click on Tools, Internet Options and select the Advanced tab. Scroll down to the Security section to find the option labelled “Empty Temporary Internet Files folder when browser is closed” and make sure there is a check mark in the box. This option will ensure the TIF folder is emptied after each session. But we are

not sure if this extends to sub folder ContentIE5... For that you may need additional software, and we may be able to help.

[CleanUp! v3.0](#) Even if you turn on the setting above, this program helps clean all the rest of the stuff that lingers around. It also has a method to prevent retrieval of their contents with lower-level disk tools.

[Ki-Washer](#) is a small and easy-to-use Internet and PC cleaning utility, that erases traces of your Internet browsing and PC activity. The program can clear the document history, IE cookies, IE cache, auto-complete data, Recycle Bin, and more. Ki-Washer displays a list of cookies that exist on your computer, and you can choose to exclude selected ones from ever being erased by adding them to an Exclude list.

## **Pocket PC and Palm OS 2.0+**

These devices are almost as common as laptops and cell phones. And now programmers are starting to offer freeware and shareware for them too. Here is a list of sites I have uncovered which may help you find a neat app to help with a difficult task or some fluff to help pass the time.

[The Absolutist](#) - online games and downloads for PC's, Palm OS, and Pocket PC

[Open Source](#) - a wide range of software available for Pocket PC

[Free e-books](#) - carry your book on your computer. You may even find a utility to let it read to you...

[Casseopia and Pocket PC Links](#) - the name says it all

## **SPAM !!!**

No one likes Spam, not necessarily even the kind you eat. But how do you stop it dead in its tracks. One method is McAfee's Spamkiller 4, but that costs real money. An alternative is the freeware version of [MailChecker32 v2.4.0.1](#) This is a small utility for checking incoming e-mail messages using set conditions. When the conditions are met, the program indicates which messages have satisfied the conditions. You can create a list of spam addresses to automatically be deleted from a server.

[Spam CSI v2.0.0.8](#) treats Spam like a crime and goes after the criminal. I have been told that this server can be extremely slow at times, but it is worth the wait. Once you track down where the Spam is coming from, you may be able to rat out the spammer to his/her ISP or web host and help get them shutdown.

## **SURFING LINKS**

Some people are just not inclined to download programs and try them out for fear of hurting their currently working systems. I don't blame you. Unless you know exactly what you are doing, it is foolish to muck about with something as sensitive and as useful as your computer. So what are the others supposed to do while there is no TekJournal for another month or so... Start at the top of this list and surf until your eyes get tired and your fingers are sore...

What is [Lomography](#)? "Lomographers shoot as many impossible pictures as possible in the most impossible of situations from the most impossible of positions."

Is anyone curious about their [Brain](#)? This site allows you to explore the area of your body weighing about three pounds that seems to govern everything you are and do. Learn about disorders, depression, migraines, and other interesting things about this amazing organ.

Who's up for [Astronomy](#)? When we were in Victoria last Fall, I visited my first Observatory and was absolutely fascinated with the things these people could see. This site, based on the magazine

of the same name, seems to be a good place to start. Click on this link if you want to view one person's version of the [Astronomy Picture of the Day](#). Another magazine, for the curious and hobbyist, is [Astronomy.com](#). Registration appears to be required, but doesn't seem to have a cost. There is also a regular newsletter.

Once you're in outer space learning about astronomy, how about exploring [Mars](#)!

Although fonts take up a ton of room in your computer, and the average user actually uses less than 10% of the ones available, here is a site I know everyone will get a kick out of. [Free TrueType Fonts](#). I use the Algerian font a lot, and it costs money. If anyone ever finds a knock-off which is free, please pass it along.

Are you having trouble running some programs in Windows XP? Here is a link that may just save your day. The Application Verifier from Microsoft can be found by copying and pasting this link into your browser. <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=286568>

Even though I have a great memory for facts about computers, I envy people who can remember lines from movies, plays, Shakespeare, etc. Whenever I need a great quote, I can never think of it fast enough. Well, here is a [Quote Site](#) that just might help us all.

Sometimes you just need a good dose of [Data Destruction](#). But make sure you have the proper backups in place before continuing... We all have at least a few CD's with data on it that we don't want to just throw away, somebody might use the information against us. And what about the hundreds of AOL CD's we get (it at least seems like hundreds). What do we do with those? This site may just be your answer... Who thought fried CD's could be the new art form.

Spyware - We have all heard about it, and many of us have become victims to it without knowing it. I have identified several programs that can help get rid of it once you have it - [Adaware](#) from Lavasoft, [BulletProofSoft's](#) BPS Spyware/Adware Remover, and [Search and Destroy](#) which claims BPS is stolen and plans to sue the company and anyone using it. Right... However, there is another site to be used as a resource for learning about and identifying this type of product. [The Spyware Guide](#). Everyone should visit this site and make sure their systems won't accept Spyware and Adware in the future.

In keeping with the Spyware theme, here is a program to help you manage [Internet Explorer's Restricted Zone](#) settings to stop the sites that want to install third party software and use advertising tracking.

This brings this issue to a close. Hopefully you didn't find this issue too boring, and will want to review it again and again to try the software or visit the surfing links. I promise to be back in form next month when I hope to have a new issue available by April 15, 2003. Until then,

Safe Computing

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