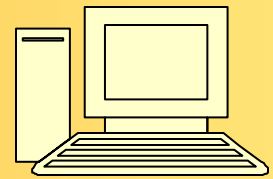


BAY BYTES

Greater Tampa Bay Personal Computer User Group, Inc.



Newsletter

Issue 3

March 2012

25th Year of People Helping People!



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Don't forget to visit our club's site at:

<http://gtbpcug.org>

As well Don Miller's and Darrell Manns' :

<http://www.dmanns.org/dmiller/>

Can you protect your identity for free?

<http://komando.com>

Q. Is there something I can do for free to protect my identity? I know you use ProtectMyID. But I'd rather not pay for protection.

A. I hear you, sister. I'd rather not pay, either. Free is my favorite price. But I do pay for ProtectMyID.com from Experian (www.protectmyid.com/kim) because it's the best deal. They're an advertiser, but I pay for it.

You see, identity theft is a real problem. It's been increasing about 25 percent per year since 2007. And if it happens to you, you could spend years getting your identity back.

But since you asked about free, let me give you the straight scoop. There are actually two free things you can do to protect your identity. However, one offers too little protection, in my opinion. And the other, amazingly enough, offers too much.

The former is free credit reports at AnnualCreditReport.com. Each of the three credit agencies must provide a free report yearly. I take advantage of this service. I spread them out, looking at one report every four months. The three reports can differ, so it's a good idea to check each.

To use this site, click the down arrow next to Select Your State. Make your selection and click Request Report. Fill out the form. On the next window, pick a credit agency.

So, what's wrong with free credit reports? Well, nothing. But they're not enough to protect you.

You can spread them over a year. However, you'll have long periods when you're not checking. An identity thief could do a lot of damage in four months. Most theft will occur within one week of the bad guys getting your personal information.

The other free service is a credit freeze. This one goes to the other extreme. No new lenders can get a look at your credit report.

Continued on the next page

Here's how it works. You send a letter to each credit agency, requesting a freeze. You'll also have to send a utility bill, to prove you're you. There will also be a small charge. If everything's in order, your report will be frozen for several years.

There's really not much to it. This is about as foolproof as possible. Companies that regularly check your credit, like auto insurers, can still see it. Only new creditors will be blocked.

But there's a catch. What happens when you decide to change cell phone service providers? The new guys will want to check your credit. Or, say you're at the store. You're offered a great deal on the store's credit card. But the store needs to check your credit.

The hassle begins. You must find out which credit agency the business uses. Then you must call and give the agency a PIN. At the very least, this is not going to be smooth. You have real problems if you can't remember the PIN.

Personally, I'd rather split the difference. It's true that ProtectMyID.com (www.protectmyid.com/kim) is not free. It runs less than \$10 per month. That's a price I'm willing to pay. It doesn't get in your way as a freeze does. And it offers solid protection.

Should someone open an account in your name, you'll be notified. You'll have time to stop it before they can do any damage. That may not be the case if you're only checking credit reports. If your identity is stolen, you'll have a specialist to help you.

Overall, ProtectMyID.com gives me the best deal. That's why I use it.

You can get a free 14-day trial now. [Click here to sign up now.](#)

I have more information on my site about identity theft. In fact, we get many questions about it. So, we set up a comprehensive [ID Theft Center](#).

Tip:

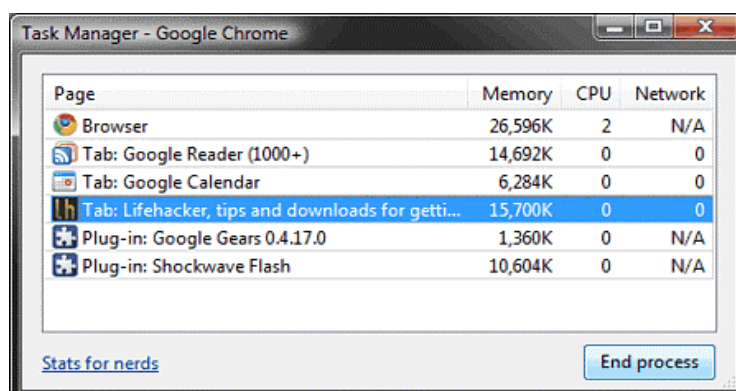
[Using Chrome's Task Manager to Kill Problematic Tabs](#)

<http://www.tech-recipes.com>

Contributed by Rob Rodgers

If you encounter a situation where one of the tabs in Google Chrome is causing you problems and won't close, you don't have to close the browser to get rid of your troubles. Chrome comes with its own Task Manager that shows you how much of available resources are used by any open pages and used plug-ins. It also allows you to end process on any open tab without having to shutdown the browser.

- 1. While in Google Chrome, use the following keyboard shortcut: Shift+Esc.**
- 2. The Task Manager will appear. Select the desired page that needs to be closed.**
- 3. Click the: End Process Button**



...most people are security aware, but not so security savvy!

The results of PC Tools global survey of 4500 users are in! While consumers are aware of potential sources of infection, 74% of people are not aware of the need for [behavioral based protection](#) against online threats. This leaves them at risk from new and unknown threats on social networking sites, instant messaging services and other online communication and networking tools. As many as one in five do not understand the potential impact of some of the more dangerous attacks like zero day threats, while 41% of respondents use only one or two passwords across all the sites they visit online and 8% use only one password for all sites, suggesting respondents are not so security savvy!

On the other hand, research showed that a significant proportion of people are aware of the need for some level of security protection for their PCs with 57% saying that they have a security suite installed and 64% having their security software configured to update automatically as new information becomes available. A savvy 84% will always take action when they receive a security alert from the software they've installed, while 37% will verify a received link before following it...great work people!

While it's promising to see that most respondents are security aware and have installed security products on their PCs, it seems users may be bloating their systems by installing too many security solutions.

Did you know that light or 'point' solutions like [Spyware Doctor™](#) and [Spyware Doctor™ with AntiVirus](#) can help minimize the drag on systems while ensuring the level of behavioral protection necessary to keep users safe online? Point solutions also provide consumers the option of designing their own security suite by pulling together a range of must have point solutions that suit users' individual security needs. Alternatively, [PC Tools Internet Security™](#) suite is an all in one solution that brings together the basic four core security functions – anti-spyware, anti-virus, fire-wall and spam protection for users that prefer to set and forget.

Don't forget that even with the best security protection, the methods of cybercriminals continue to evolve every day so users should always be on guard. If you are unsure about what you need to do to protect yourself [Ask Dr Greene](#)

Microsoft is updating the Support Lifecycle policy for Windows desktop operating systems, including Windows XP, Windows Vista and Windows 7.

The update will provide a more consistent and predictable experience for customers using Microsoft Windows operating systems across OEM, consumer and business editions.

Microsoft still requires that customers have the most current Service Pack installed in order to continue to receive updates.

Through this update, customers who remain on the most current supported service pack will be eligible to receive both Mainstream and Extended Support, for a total of 10 years.

So the new support expiry dates are as follows:

Windows XP 4/8/2014

Windows Vista 4/11/2017

Windows 7 1/14/2020

Backing up an iTunes library

<http://www.komando.com>

Q. My son has an iPhone. His iTunes collection is 13.3 gigabytes. All of this is stored on our computer's hard drive. I would like to back up the music. What method do you recommend? Should I back it up online or use a thumb drive? Or are there other options?

A. Your question is troublesome, Larry. You see, 13.3 GB is not a particularly large amount of data. So, there's nothing terribly difficult about backing up this data.

But the fact that you're posing the question worries me. It sounds like you're not backing up at all. If not, you're asking for trouble.

In seconds, your important documents, e-mail and other data could disappear. And you might never get it back.

So, I fear you have more to worry about than the music. You need a plan for backing up your entire system. You have many options. Let's look at the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Choose the one that works best for you.

CDs/DVDs

Discs are a quick and easy way to share data. They're also good for making music CDs and DVDs for standalone players.

However, CDs and DVDs are not suitable for backups. Their storage sizes are relatively small. You can fit a paltry 800 megabytes on a CD. With DVDs, this is upped to 8.5GB. Your son's music collection would overwhelm either. Capacity isn't their only problem. The real catch is that they're not very reliable.

Optical discs can be scratched or broken. However, the main worry with burned discs is deterioration. When you burn a disc, a laser heats a media layer within the disk. Over time, that layer changes, making the disc unusable. If you truly value your data, skip these discs.

Flash drives

Flash drives are handy for transporting data. They're small and can be put on a keychain or in a pocket.

Furthermore, they're highly reliable. They're less susceptible to drops and falls than other media. The biggest physical threats to flash drives are theft and loss.

Unfortunately, flash memory is relatively expensive. You'll pay more per gigabyte than with a hard drive. Also, storage capacities are limited. Thumb drives top out at 64GB, although 128GB ones are on the way. You'll pay a premium for a 64GB thumb drive--about \$150.

Flash drives are an excellent choice for backups, except for cost. Wondering how long a flash drive will last? Good question! You'll find the answer in my quick tip.

Hard drives

Hard drives are probably the most popular backup solution. These days, they're ridiculously inexpensive. You can pick up a 1 terabyte external drive for about \$100.

Continued on the next page

You can get an external hard drive for even less. That assumes you don't mind doing a little tinkering. My fun tip will help you build your own external hard drive.

Of course, the most popular solution may not be the best. Such is the case with hard drives. They are relatively fragile. Drop one, and it's toast. Even if you're careful, a hard drive will fail over time. I wouldn't trust a hard drive past five years. Many fail much sooner than that.

There are many pros when it comes to hard drives. However, their high failure rate should give anyone pause.

Online services

An online service is probably your best option for backups. I use Carbonite to back up my computers at home and the office. (Carbonite is one of my advertisers.)

With Carbonite, you don't need to worry about media failing. And, with unlimited backups, storage capacity isn't a problem.

Online services also add additional layers of protection. Your data is stored off-site. So, you don't need to worry about a fire or other disaster taking your data. And, backups are performed automatically. With Carbonite, backups become a set it and forget it affair.

I get a lot of questions about Carbonite. Most are about security. That's a valid concern when you're storing data off-site.

Carbonite is serious about security. You can learn more about Carbonite's security and encryption features in my handy tip.

Carbonite has a special offer for my listeners. You'll get two months free if you use my sign-up page, Carbonite.com/Kim. That's in addition to the standard 15-day free trial.

You'll want to make sure you're backing up all the right files. Otherwise, you'll be in for a shock when your computer fails. My must-read tip covers the essentials.

Finally, some of the data you're backing up is probably sensitive. You don't want this data compromised. I have a great free download that will help you encrypt it.

Tip:

No Options in Power Settings in Control panel XP Home/Pro

Try this: Start > Run and type in or paste:

control.exe powercfg.cpl

then press enter and make the changes.

Is Your Internet Security up to Date?

Antivirus up to date?

Firewall?

Windows up to date?

Spy Ware?

See how to protect your computer at:

<http://gtbpcug.org/protect/>



More about Internet Threats

Your Facebook Profile Page is Changing

By Christina DesMarais for Techlicious

Your Facebook profile—and the amount of information available to others about you—is about to change considerably. Last year, Facebook introduced Timeline, a new kind of profile page that visually aggregates everything you've ever shared, liked or done on the social network and sites linked to it. Until now, using Timeline was optional. But, within the next few weeks, Facebook is making everyone switch over.

Once you are switched on, you have seven days to make changes to your Timeline before others can see it, giving you some time to hide posts from long ago that you may have forgotten about.

While Facebook users never like change, Timeline is arguably much more visually interesting than the old profile. That said, the new feature also raises some serious privacy concerns which I address in a bit.

Google Privacy Policy Changing - for Better & Worse

Starting March 1st, Google will be consolidating more than 60 privacy policies into one and make your data available across Google products. The company says it is changing to make its services more intuitive and improve search. For example, by tracking what you write about in Gmail, post on Google+ or watch on YouTube, Google will be better able to guess whether you're looking for a hotel in France or a certain famous blond heiress if you search for "Paris Hilton."

By unifying all your data, Google products will also be able to complement each other. That means if Google knows the location of your Android phone and sees on your Google Calendar that you're going to be late for an appointment, not only can it alert you but it can also provide you with driving directions on how to get there through Maps.

There's been quite a bit of uproar about these changes. For one thing, you can't opt out.

What's a screen shot and how do I make one?

A screen shot, or screen capture, is a way to "take a picture" of your computer screen.

Why?

Say that you're trying to explain a computer problem to a technical friend of yours and you're trying to describe what you see on the screen - the dialogs, the buttons, the messages, whatever. You're not sure of the terms to use and your friend is having a difficult time understanding your description of what you see.

You know what they say: "A picture is worth a thousand words." And it can go a *long* way to eliminating miscommunication.

Let's take a picture of your screen and email it to your friend.

Ever wonder what the **PrtScn** key is for? A long time ago, it did what you might think. Push it and your printer would print an image of whatever was on your screen. It was kinda cool.

But that's not what it does in Windows today.

"You know what they say: 'A picture is worth a thousand words.'"

When you press the **PrtScn** key, an image of your screen is placed on your clipboard. Now, rather than printing it, you can *do* something with it.

Like email it to a friend.

First, we need to make a file out of it. After you've pressed **PrtScn**, fire up your favorite image editor or use the Paint program that comes with Windows by pressing **Start, All Programs, Accessories**, and then **Paint**. Now in Paint (or your equivalent), hit **Edit, Paste**, and you should now have an image of your screen within the image editing program.

Now, save this image to a file. Typically, that means **File, Save As....** Give it a file name that you'll remember. I'd also suggest selecting either a JPEG or PNG file format instead of the default bitmap; they're smaller in file size.

Hopefully, you can see the value. You're presented with a complex situation or a huge, long error message that you don't want to re-type and just wish that you could show someone.

Press **PrtScn**, paste it into your paint program, save it to disk, and email the picture as an attachment.

A couple of additional notes:

PrtScn takes a picture of the entire current screen.

ALT+PrtScn takes a picture of the currently active window only.

PrtScn does not work on blue screens. The Windows operating system provides the **PrtScn** functionality and if the operating system has crashed, the function's not there.

Some things to look into...

<http://www.google.com/alerts?hl=en>

On the top row on the right side you will see 'more' with a drop down arrow.

Go to the bottom and click 'even more'.

Scroll down to 'Specialized Search.' Click on 'Alerts.' Put in your search terms, and be sure to use 'As-it-happens' so you get the email in real time. Have Outlook set up for all alerts to go into a folder. It will give you the time of the alert.

<http://tinyurl.com/8ykhny6>

Whether it's a bad memory card or user error, your photos may not be gone forever.

Watch Kim Komando show you three free programs you can use to recover your precious photos.

<http://askthecomputerlady.com/questions/2012/01/how-to-save-favorites-mail/>

How to Save Favorites & Mail

Tip:

What is the difference between a factory restore disc and a backup?

Do I need to make a backup even when I have a restore disc?

A restore disc is typically a CD or DVD that ships with a new PC and contains a complete image of the operating system and basic applications provided by the PC manufacturer. If your PC suffers from a severe fault, such as hard drive failure or a virus attack that you simply can't clear, you can use the restore disc to return your PC to its "factory fresh" state.

By comparison, a backup is basically a copy of data that you make periodically to a CD, DVD, a USB hard drive, or other media. There are many ways to back up a PC. For example, a small, simple backup may only copy your recent Word documents or Microsoft Money files. These types of backups guard against accidental file deletion or corruption. More comprehensive backups can preserve your important applications, as well as data. These backups are ideal for protecting applications that you may have downloaded or no longer have the original installation media for. The largest and most complete backups can even capture the entire current state of your PC for complete recovery in the event of drive failure.

Factory restore discs are convenient, but they don't keep track of your system's evolution over time—they don't capture your driver updates, operating system patches, new applications and their patches, and all of the data that you created. So, if you restore a PC from its recovery disc, you'll need to reinstall all of the patches and programs that you've added since the system was purchased, and all of the data that you created will be lost unless you've made copies of those files. There is no rule that says you must create backups, but they can be a lifesaver if you take the time to create them and keep them up-to-date. A full backup can capture the entire system state and allow you to restore your PC.

<http://techtalk.pcpitstop.com/2012/01/31/ask-leo-why-i-dont-like-system-restore/>

By Leo Notenboom

Q. I have Windows XP SP2. When I go into the System Restore application, it doesn't give me the option to create a restore point; it only allows me to restore to an earlier point and it never creates restore points. Any ideas on what might be wrong or how to fix it?

A. I'll be honest and tell you right off that I have no answer for your question.

There are many possibilities; the most likely being that there is not enough room allocated for restore points. But in my experience, increasing that may or may not resolve the issue.

System Restore is so difficult to diagnose and I hear of so many problems and misunderstandings with it that I avoid it completely. I turn it off. Completely. It's not worth it to me. I'll tell you what I do instead.

What System Restore is?

System Restore is best thought of as a registry backup. Yes, in reality, it backs up more than just the registry, but exactly what else it backs up gets complicated. Suffice it to say that System Restore does not back up everything.

And as a registry backup, it's actually a pretty reasonable solution. When it works, it's a fine way to take a snapshot of the registry and restore it after other changes have been made.

"Leave it enabled, if you like, but don't rely on it."

What System Restore is not?

System Restore does not restore the system. More specifically, it does not restore everything to the state that it was at the time the restore point was created. It restores *some* things - like the registry - but not all things - like your files. System Restore is not a substitute for backup!

System Restore in the wild

Much of my opinion on System Restore is not based on its definition or its intent. In theory, it's a great concept, poorly named (remember, it doesn't restore your system, only some of it). I'm not a fan of its user interface, but even that seems to be improving and that doesn't really factor much into my opinion.

What does is that, in practice, it seems to have problems.

Your inability to manually create a restore point is one example.

Other examples that I hear of frequently are the inability to restore to a listed restore point and the lack of a restore point to restore to. Yes, sometimes, these are configuration issues. Sometimes, these are issues of mismatched expectations.

But often - too often - even understanding what should and should not be appropriate to expect of System Restore, it lets people down. I see it in my inbox frequently.

System Restore successes

To be completely fair, I do also hear of successes with System Restore. It's not that uncommon to hear of problems caused by an installation to be completely repaired by reverting to a recent restore point. Like I said, it's a great concept, when it works.

Don't rely on System Restore

Given that it *can* work, but can also fail unpredictably, what course of action does that leave you?

Simple. Don't rely on System Restore. Leave it enabled, if you like, but don't rely on it. Don't build your way of using your computer such that a System Restore failure would cause you a lot of problems.

Be happy when it works; be prepared when it doesn't.

Instead of System Restore

What I typically advise people to do is to turn off System Restore completely and rely instead on a good system backup strategy. By "good backup strategy," I mean that you regularly take full system backups of your machine, augmented with frequent incremental backups.

If something goes wrong, restore from the most recent backup. Yes, this can take more time than restoring to a System Restore restore point. But restoring from a backup *does* restore your entire system.

It's what I do.

Choosing to leave System Restore enabled is also a fine approach, but only in addition to having those backups. That way, when System Restore works for you, it's a shortcut - a time saver. And when it fails, it's not a disaster.

The (Not so) lighter side

www.photosecrets.com

The venerable Eastman Kodak Co. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Once the world's biggest camera maker and photo film supplier, Kodak had lost its way in a digital world it helped create.

"After 132 years [Kodak] is poised, like an old photo, to fade away."

Kodak was founded in 1889 by George Eastman. Wanting a short and distinctive brand name, Eastman created the name Kodak with his mother using an anagram set and a preference for the letter "k" which he considered "a strong, incisive sort of letter."

A high-school dropout from rural New York who worked in a bank, Eastman almost single-handedly created amateur photography by inventing cheap and portable cameras and film. Eastman Kodak's list of photography firsts is, and probably will be, unsurpassed:

- 1884: The first cameras suitable for non-expert use.
- 1885: Roll-film, the first flexible photographic film and the basis of movies.
- 1888: The Kodak camera, the first camera for consumers, starting amateur photography.
- 1900: The Brownie camera, a simple camera which initially cost only \$1 and created a new mass market for photography.
- 1935: Kodachrome, the first more portable 35mm color film.
- 1975: The first digital camera, developed by Steven Sasson, an electrical engineer at Kodak.
- 1986: The first megapixel sensor, capable of recording 1.4 million pixels and producing a photo-quality 12.5 x 17.5 cm (5x7 inch) print.
- 1992: PhotoCD, the first low-cost system to scan and store photos in a digital format.
- 2003: The Kodak EasyShare LS633 Digital Camera, the world's first digital camera to feature a full-color, active-matrix organic light-emitting diode display.



Since 2008, despite Kodak's best efforts, restructuring costs and recessionary forces have continued to negatively impact the company's liquidity position."

CFO Antoinette McCorvey, in the bankruptcy filing, January 19, 2012.



Some Material appearing in this newsletter was provided by other members of the GTBPCUG. Thank you.

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