User Friendly

IN THIS ISSUE

Ctrl-Click on this icon to see our Meetup Page.

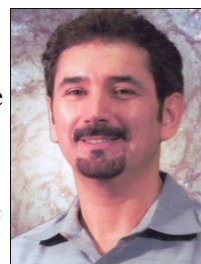Ctrl-Click on this icon to follow us on Twitter.

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www.youtube.com/apcugvide

APRIL 10 GENERAL MEETING

Digital Camouflage Using Virtual Private Networks (VPN)
Speaker: **Joe Melfi, Consultant**

How do we keep the curious and the devious from seeing our activity while using the internet? We need to protect our passwords, account logins, and other private info. Web surfing and emails could be more vulnerable to snooping than most people know, especially when using public Wi-Fi! We'll discuss the best way to help make your data unreadable and untraceable.

Who Should Be Using VPN?

- Anyone in public… Free/Paid Wi-Fi at coffee shops, restaurants, libraries, hotels, etc.
- Mobile users and travelers who use unknown networks
- Home users for security and privacy

Topics include: Focus on VPN solutions, how it works, types available, apps and software, devices and hardware, free versus pay options, and caveats and compromises (nothing is perfect).

Meet Our Presenter

Joe Melfi is a Strategic Technical Marketing Engineer in Southern CA. He is experienced in the Internet of Things, the cloud, networking, industrial and home automation, and semiconductor solutions. He was a college instructor and a technical trainer and has traveled to companies around the world. Joe is a die-hard tech enthusiast and builder, and he often presents at user groups and industry events.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018, 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Westchester United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall
8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester, L.A. 90045
An informal Computer Q & A Roundtable meets from **6:30 to 7:20** to answer individual questions.
Refreshments and socializing at **7:00**
More info: www.lacspc.org
or at 310-398-0366
All are welcome.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

New Special Interest Group (SIG)

LACS president, Stanley Johnson, is planning a SIG meeting on Monday, April 9 at 7:00 PM at the Santa Monica College, Bundy Campus in room 236. The topics will be 1) A Social Media Refresher and 2) World Backup Day.

We will listen to a podcast by Abby Stokes, author of "Is This Thing On?" about how to navigate Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram" followed by a discussion of recent privacy issues. We will also listen to a podcast on World Backup Day and options like external drives and online services. Questions, and answers will follow.

Please RSVP to Stanley. At least seven attendees will be needed to hold this SIG.

Secretary Needed

LACS is in desperate need of a secretary. The secretary writes and keeps the minutes of the board meetings on the first Monday of each month. Board members will help you and answer any questions. As a member of the board, you will have input on the future of LACS. Officers who are doing other tasks now have to write the minutes,

LACS Website

www.lacspc.org posts back copies of the color version of *User Friendly*, calendar information, and podcasts of most of our general meetings. URLs are clickable in the online version of *User Friendly.*

Read your LACS eMail

It's the only way to know what's going on. If you're having any problem receiving it, please contact Karl Springer at 424-646-3410 or send an email to mailguy (at) LACSPC.org.

I'm sorry this issue is late. I was in China!

I plan to go back to a 20-page newsletter with the May issue. It would be wonderful if our members could contribute short articles on any technology subject of interest, including reviews of websites, utilities, software, or hardware. They could say why they like or dislike an item, or share experiences. The opinions of members may help others.

Please tell me what you would like to see in *User Friendly*.

Protect Your Tech Stuff

Here are some thoughts from the February 10, 2018 Virtual Technology Conference given by Toby Scott, the Channel Islands PCUG.

It is scary to think of having to evacuate or of losing things and data in case of a disaster. Toby Scott emphasized the importance of having a plan before disaster strikes. No home fire safe can protect our documents or backup media from the intense heat of a fire. He says we must have cloud backup for anything we would miss if it is gone forever. This includes data, pictures and passwords. Onsite backups are not enough. We need to let our heirs know how to find everything. Toby offered much helpful information on how to protect ourselves from loss. I learned a lot of practical information from this presentation. You can see slides from it at www.apcug2.org.

The Editor of *User Friendly* accepts contributions of any suitable length from members. Send articles to Leahjc(at)sbcglobal.net as plain text in an email message or as a Word document by the **20th of the month.**

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
March 13, 2018

By **Leah Clark**, LACS Editor
Speaker: **Greg Skalka,**
Voice Operated Assistants

The thing about these devices is that they are like a child, they are growing and increasing in capability all the time. At the end of 2016, there were only three separate standalone devices in existence; now there are hundreds. Everyone should be aware of what they do, and if they could benefit you.

There are three kinds of voice-operated assistants: dedicated devices, augmented devices, and assistants on smartphones and tablets. It all started with Siri, Google assistant, and Microsoft Cortana. Then Amazon came along with Alexa and Amazon Echo. Google came in with assistant software to use on Android devices. Just last month Apple came in with the Home Pod, using their Siri technology.

An augmented device has a different purpose but uses voice activation to carry it out. They include Amazon Fire TV Stick, a GPS with Alexa capability, and other appliances. Amazon is letting everyone use their capability, but Apple wants to control everything, so they are not out in the world like Amazon is.

These devices are marketed as voice- controlled speakers. They are Wi-Fi connected, but they also have Bluetooth speakers. They can play music, answer questions, and control devices. They can call and send messages and provide a voice interface for other devices like TVs. You don't need a remote control; just tell the TV to turn to channel 9. This can be very useful for someone who is visually impaired or has mobility issues. One doesn't need to get up to turn on a light, close the drapes, or change the thermostat.

This presentation emphasized the Amazon Echo family, it being the most prevalent.

Echo

The Amazon family started with the **Echo** which is a nine-inch tall cylindrical speaker. You can get it for $100.00. The **Dot** is the size and shape of a hockey puck and can be bought for as low as $29.00. That was followed by the **Tap**

Dot

which is battery powered. In 2017 they came out with the **Show** with a screen to view videos and other information by voice control;

Tap

the **Look**, a style camera, to see yourself from every angle; the **Plus**, a hub used

Show

to control smartphone devices; and the **Spot**, a junior version of the Show.

Look

All these devices, whether Amazon, Google or Apple, have to be addressed with an **Awake** word —The original for

Spot

Amazon is **Alexa**, but others have been added. You can link them to your phone or Bluetooth speakers. The Dot has audio output jacks to plug in speakers, some have screens for showing information and playing videos, and all have multiple microphones built into them so they can hear and recognize their names and discern being addressed from background noise.

Amazon augmented devices have a function, but they have Alexa control. They include tablets and their **Fire Stick**. Now they have **X Alexa** or **Echo Connect**. It's a box you can hook up to your home landline phone connection, and it will make and receive calls through voice control. They have a **Fire TV** with a 4K voice remote box. Amazon has licensed Alexa to be in speakers, thermostats, and all sorts of other stuff.

Greg recently found that there are 692 Alexa enabled devices. He did the same search in October 2017; he found only 91!

All these things require set-up which is done through the Alexa app. Use this app to set-up the Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, other preferences, and what Amazon calls **Skills**. You can call Uber through it, order a pizza, answer your questions, and do scads of other things. You can find the capital of a country, do calculations, play music or the radio, consult your calendar, set alarms, timers, lights, sprinklers, security cameras, sound effects, and drapery controllers, lock your doors, play games, and read Kindle books. You are able to get news, traffic information, the weather, and a business's hours and phone number.

There are many things to do to make it secure. Set a password so your neighbor kid can't come over and order something. Amazon will offer discounts if you order through Alexa. You can use Alexa as an intercom in your home. They just keep on adding Skills. A lot of the **Internet of Things** devices have joined with Amazon. As of last Saturday (March 10), there were over 2000 IoT devices that were Alexa capable.

Greg played an outstanding video he made to demonstrate what Alexa can do.

He then talked a little about Google's family of devices. They only have three items at this point. **Google Home** looks like an air freshener. Their **Home Max** has better sound quality. Their Awake word is **Okay Google** or **Hey Google**. It now does most everything that Echo does. The **Google Mini** looks like a donut without the hole.

The **Apple Home Pod** is the latest. It came out February 2018. It is a bit pricey. It is compatible with all the iPhone, iPad and iTouch devices, and uses Siri. It requires one of these devises to set it up. It does some of what the Echo does, but mostly within the Apple ecosystem.

What are the benefits of all these devices? They are always there, hands-free, you don't have to get up or boot your computer, don't have to look up stuff, and they are easy to use. They are continually growing in capability and will be built into everything.

How wonderful this could be for someone with sight, mobility, or other impairments!

Greg then discussed the dark side and security concerns and answered a lot of questions. Listen to the podcast at www.lacspc.org to hear it all.

FUTURE SIGs OF LACS

By **Fred Kong**, LACS Member

Special Interest Groups in the L.A. Computer Society have been temporarily suspended. Our SIGs traditionally met once monthly and each of them covered various computer/electronically related subjects. But it seems that interest fell out due to multiple reasons. Among them are lack of need or interest, too much detail and theory, or they covered too much on one subject that lasted too many months.

But here's our chance to make a change! There's sure to be interest in new subjects, especially among our later members. And we don't want to lose our access to the room at Santa Monica College through nonuse. We ask our members to tell us their choice of an individual subject that they would like discussed. Note we didn't say "covered." They could be quick, simple how-to's such as printing just a part of a page and not all the pages, choosing and using a flash or memory card, Windows 10, or anything. These could be done and finished in maybe one or so meetings and not months nor semesters.

Now, here's the more catchy part. In addition to all the expected subjects, we will be asking for members at large to do these presentations occasionally and to help organize them. You'll get plenty of help. **OK, are you ready?** ❖

FitBark

The Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii's Aloha Chapter, Computer Users Group, The TUG, February 2018, http://www.the-tug.org

FitBark is basically a Fitbit for pets that tracks a dog's activity and sleep. The mobile app lets you check a dog's data from an app to monitor medical issues, quality of sleep, distance traveled, and calories burned, 24/7. Moreover, it compares the owner and his pet's increase in activity, and it is compatible with other applications such as Fitbit, HealthKit, Jawbone, and Google Fit. The dog-bone-shaped collar accessory is waterproof, syncs with smartphones via Bluetooth or an internet connection. It is light enough (eight grams) that any pet can comfortably wear it. www.fitbark.com ❖
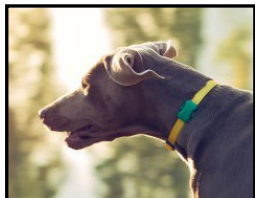
WINDOWS 10 FOR DUMMIES

Book Review by **Choy Lai & Clemens Pratt**
Members, Melbourne PCUG, Australia
PC Update, August 2017,
www.melbpc.org.au
George (at) melbpc.org.au

Windows 10 for Dummies from publishers John Wiley & Sons is not just for dummies! The "for Dummies" tag merely indicates that its treatment of the subject is a simple step-by-step guide for navigating through both the old and new features of Windows 10; for non-beginners it is a comprehensive reference. It would be particularly valuable for anyone new to computing for whom Windows 10 is their first operating system.

Microsoft has designed Windows 10 to look and feel the same when implemented on PCs, tablet computers and smartphones, and author Andy Rathbone provides material for all three. He is an experienced writer whose use of headings, figures, lists, informative panels and marginal indicators makes it inviting to browse and easy to find useful information.

Even experts in MelbPC will discover valuable features that they have previously been unaware of.

This book shows how to manage Windows tasks, troubleshoot problems and make quick fixes. It comprises 7 parts:

- Windows 10 Stuff Everybody Thinks You Already Know
- Working with Programs, Apps and Files
- Getting Things Done on the Internet
- Customizing and Upgrading Windows 10
- Music, Photos and Movies
- Help!
- The Part of Tens

Various icons in the margins highlight what's new in Windows 10:

- Tips
- Technical stuff
- Warnings
- Remember
- Touchscreen

It is worthwhile taking note of the icons, as they help the reader looking for an aspect.

The 'Start' button is back, with access to apps as well as settings, shutdown and restart options.

Some features new to Windows 10 are:

- **Action Centre** serves as a hub for system notifications, such as when Windows wants to let you know updates have been installed, and quick access to some key settings. Action Centre is a sensible and useful addition to the interface.
- Windows Explorer in Win 7 is now renamed as **File Explorer** and enhanced with the addition of a **Quick Access** section. For folders that are regularly accessed, right click them and add them to Quick Access. They are then there in Explorer and just one click away.

- A new taskbar icon called **Task View** is very handy. Click it and all your apps are tiled on the desktop. **Alt-Tab** is great at flipping between application windows. The Task View icon offers a two-click method of switching. The ability to swap between multiple desktops will prove to be indispensable. For instance, one desktop may have Word, a PDF document, and Excel to view. Alt-Tab switches between these windows. A second desktop may have reports to write. Seriously, this is a beneficial new feature.

- Another built-in application is **Virtual Desktops**. It runs several desktops on a single monitor. It does not take up precious system resources or space with the additional desktops, because you are not creating a virtual machine. It provides more desktop space for separate tasks and also allows quick access to what you need.

- Internet Explorer has been replaced by a new browser, **Internet Edge.**

- **Universal Apps** make it simple for developers of Android and Apple iOS to convert their wares to Windows. These apps will run on Windows 10 phone, tablet, PC, laptop and X-box.

The last two parts of this book are great for problem solving. As with other books in the "for Dummies" series, it finishes with its so-called Part of Tens, in this case:

- Ten Things You'll Hate About Windows 10 (and How to Fix Them)

- Ten or So Tips for Tablet and Laptop Owners

- These are worth perusing for making some DIY adjustments.

For both the novice with no prior knowledge of Windows and the expert, the book explains each step in its execution.

It is simple and easy to follow.

Being one of the early books on Windows 10, it provides a speedy way to become skilled in this latest Windows version.❖
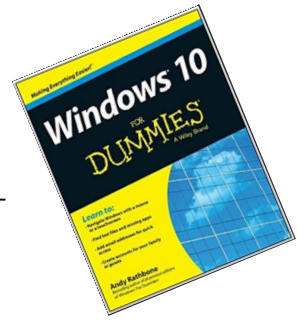
THE WINDOWS 10 START MENU
VOICE COMMANDS

By **Lee Reynolds**, The "Windows 10 Guru"
Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society
www.brcs.org
leetutor (at) att.net

Do you talk to your computer? I don't mean swearing at it because it doesn't do the thing you want it to do. You should be able to have it find desired files on your computer, remind you to go to a doctor's appointment, play your favorite music, or even convert a certain number of kilograms to pounds.

How do you get your PC to do those things by voice commands alone?

You will need to configure **Speech Recognition** on Windows 10. You start this by getting into Control Panel (Type the words **Control Panel** into the search box on the left side of the Task Bar.) You then are given several options to choose from, one of which will be **Ease of Access**. Click on that, and you are taken to a page which offers the options **Ease of Access Center** and **Speech Recognition**.

When you click on Speech Recognition, you are taken to a window where you will click on the option for **Start Speech Recogntion**. That takes you to a **Set up Speech Recognition** page where you again click on the tab at the bottom right for Next.

You are now taken to a page where you specify the type of microphone you will be using. When you click the Next button, read the

LACS NOTICES

WELCOME ALL

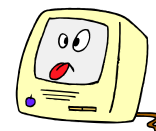**George Wolkon,** LACS Database Manager

New Members (1)

Paul Taylor

Renewals (9)

Bob Ginsberg **	Sheila Moncavage
Irv Hershman	Michael Napoli
Fred Kong	James Thomas *
Ruth Kong	Rich Waters
Clarene Long	

* Benefactor   ** Contributor

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to www.lacspc.org. Click on **Member Forms** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update,** select **Click Here** for either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out and bring it to a meeting or mail it. Or email your changes to membership@lacspc.org.

LACS HAS JOINED MEETUP

Our Meetup group is called:
"Los Angeles Computer Society and Technology Meetup."

Please join - it's free. If others see that a lot of people are interested, they will be encouraged to join LACS. We hope this will result in new members.

Go to http://www.meetup.com/Los-Angeles-Computer-Society-and-Technology-Meetup/
and click on "**Join Us.**" Also, **RSVP** for our general meetings**.**

LACS IS ON TWITTER

On **Twitter**, follow us at:
https://twitter.com/LA_CompSoc
The LACS board voted to discontinue the **Facebook** page for now.

FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?

Jim McKnight has an open offer to all LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free. There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net .

Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year new Regular LACS membership ($40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

April 10   Digital Camouflage Using Virtual Private Networks (VPN)
May 8   Chromebooks
June 12   Become Your Own Computer Expert
July 10   Google Apps at Home and on the Go

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Check your email, *User Friendly,* and our website for updates.

PODCASTS

Listen to the podcasts of our general meetings. Go to http://www.lacspc.org/category/audio-files/. Click on the session you want to hear.

GENERAL MEETING SNACK SCHEDULE

By **Sylvia Q. Davis**, Hospitality Chair
Refreshments and socializing will be at **7:00**, with the meeting starting at **7:30**. Please bring refreshments at **7:00.**

April 10	J through N
May 8	O through S
June 12	T through Z
July 10	A through D
August 14	E through I

Bring **finger-food** treats such as fresh fruit, veggies, nuts, cookies, cold drinks and the like. LACS provides hot drinks.

See your email for updates and reminders.

APRIL 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 *Happy Easter*	2 Board Meeting 7:00 PM	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 **SIG Meeting** **7:00 PM**	10 **General Meeting 7:30 PM**	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Earth Day	23	24	25	26	27 ARBOR DAY	28
29	30					

See page 2 regarding the new SIG meeting on April 9

This Calendar may change.
Check your e-mail or with the SIG leader before attending a meeting.

General Meeting: Fellowship Hall on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM.
The **Board** may meet at Charlotte Semple's home or at Santa Monica College. Members in good standing are welcome to attend.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIG's)

The Daytime and the Basics & Beyond SIGs may resume **IF** there is enough interest. Please contact the leaders to make your wishes known, or to offer ideas or help. New SIGs can be created if there is sufficient interest and leadership.

Basics & Beyond SIG: Paula Van Berkom, 310-398-6734, 2nd Mon. 7 PM SMC, Bundy Campus

Daytime SIG: Jim McKnight, 310-823-7829, 4th Tues. 1 PM Felicia Mahood Center

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ADDRESSES

Felicia Mahood Senior Center, 11338 Santa Monica Blvd., West LA 90025 (at Corinth)

Fellowship Hall, Westchester United Methodist Church
       8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester 90045

Charlotte Semple, 3474 Beethoven St. LA 90066

Santa Monica College Bundy Campus, 3171 S. Bundy Drive, LA 90066.
Go west on College Dr. (1 block South of Airport Avenue, 2 blocks North of Rose.) Drive to the back to park in the lot behind the building. Our room number may change each semester. Look for it on a sign opposite the elevator on the first floor.

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then call a person whose number is listed next to it. Or you may use a Helper's e-mail address, found in your LACS Roster. We hope that you find this free service useful. **If you are experienced using a particular program or topic, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert.** To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please e-mail or call Leah Clark at Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net or at 310-677-2792. More Quick Consultants, and more categories are always needed. You may decline or postpone a call if it comes at an inconvenient time.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF, InDesign, PhotoShop, etc. - 17
Android Smartphones - 5
Apple devices - 15
Anti Malware - 12
Digital Imaging, Editing - 8
Digital Photography - 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 4
Genealogy - 5, 7
Hardware - 12

LACS Mail List - 6
Linux - 11
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 12
Mozilla Firefox - 12
MS Excel - 3, 15
MS Word - 3, 4, 10
MS Outlook - 5, 15, 17
MS PowerPoint - 15
MS Publisher - 7

Photoshop - 17
QuickBooks -18
Quicken - 3, 5
Thunderbird - 12
Visual Basic - 13
Websites - 13
Windows 7 - 16
Windows - 5, 12
WordPerfect - 5

No.	Name	Preferred Phone for Calls	From	To
3	Wilder, Joan	310-472-8445	9:00 AM	9:00 PM
4	Hershman, Irv	310-397-9453	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
5	Nordlinger, Stephanie	323-299-3244	10:00 AM	7:00 PM
6	Springer, Karl	424-646-3410	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
7	Clark, Leah	310-677-2792	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Silverstein, Elliott	310-670-1544	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
10	Beckman, Loling	310-471-7893	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
11	Hughes, Bill	424-259-1818	Any	Any
12	McKnight, Jim	310-823-7829	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
13	Ialongo, Gilbert	310-641-7906	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
15	Van Berkom, Paula	310-398-6734	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
16	Johnson, Carol	310-372-8535	10:00 AM	9:00 PM
17	Rozek, E. J.	310-823-3811	Noon	8:00 PM
18	Semple, Charlotte	310-398-5052 M-F	9:00 AM	5:00 PM

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

Title	Name	Term	Telephone
President	Stanley Johnson	2018	424-216-6984
Past President	Maurice Stephenson	2018	310-625-0450
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2018	323-299-3244
Secretary	**VACANT**	2018	
Treasurer	Charlotte Semple	2018	310-398-5052
Director	Leah Clark	2018	310-677-2792
Director	Jim McKnight	2018	310-823-7829
Director	E. J. Rozek	2018	310-823-3811
Director	Annette Tossounian	2018	310-559-2847
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2019	310-398-6734
Director	George Wolkon	2019	310-459-2671
APCUG Rep.	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Car Pool Coordinator	Freda Sanders		323-230-3278
Change of Address	Karl Springer		424-646-3410
" "	George Wolkon		310-459-2671
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
CCSC Computer Lab	Loling Beckman		310-471-7893
Hospitality Chair	Sylvia Davis		213-924-4927
Asst. Hospitality Chair	Freda Sanders		323-230-3278
Membership Database	George Wolkon		310-459-2671
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
" "	Stanley Johnson		424-216-6984
Publicity Chair	Annette Tossounian		310-559-2847
Publicity - Press	Mark Presky		310-398-0366
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom		310-398-6734
Welcome Chair	Irene Mussack		310-672-3077
Asst. Welcome Chair	Linda La Roche		310-645-4546

Website	www.lacspc.org	**Newsletter Editor**	Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net
Voice Mail	1-310-398-0366	**Webmaster**	sitemaster (at) lacspc.org
E-mail	ContactUs (at) lacspc.org	**Change of Address**	membership (at) lacspc.org

The **ContactUs (at) lacspc.org** address goes to our **president** and **vice-president**.
If the message is for another board member, they will forward it to the correct person.
To contact other officers, directors, leaders or members directly, members may use our roster
for phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

THE INTERNET: HOW DOES IT WORK?

By **Bob Rankin**
AskBob, January 23, 2018
www.askbobrankin.com

What Happens When You Click?

I once heard a presentation by one of IBM's top sales reps. He said when people asked him "How do computers work?" he always told them "Just great!" The Internet is a similar story, but I think AskBob readers, since they are smarter and better looking than the average internet user, should have a better understanding of what happens when you click a link or send an email.

"Internet" stands for "Interconnected Networks" because it's really a network of networks. The computers in your home or office are connected to a local network. That network is connected to another network operated by your Internet Service Provider (ISP). The ISP's network is connected to other ISPs' networks. Those networks may be comprised of many different types of computers. That's the hardware or physical view of the Internet.

A variety of physical media can be used to make the connections: Ethernet cable, telephone or power transmission lines, radio signals (satellite or WiFi), and beams of visible light (fiber optics) are all the same to the internet. The critical thing is that a medium is capable of transmitting information according to the protocols of the internet.

A protocol, on or off the internet, is an agreed language for communicating, and a set of rules for doing something. There are fire drill protocols; CPR protocols; Dinner-With-the-Queen protocols, and Internet Protocol. The last is the "IP" in the acronym, "TCP/IP."

Internet Protocol (IP) determines where data goes and how it travels. Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) makes sure it gets there quickly and intact. The Internet Protocol is the set of rules followed to deliver data from point A to point B on the internet based on the destination machine's IP address. TCP stands for Transmission Control Protocol; it is the set of rules followed to ensure fast, error-checked transmission of data between two points on the Internet.

AskBobRankin.com

IP Addresses and the Domain Name System

A numeric IP address is similar to the address written on a postcard. Applying the rules of the Internet Protocol to an IP address should get data from the sending (host) machine to the one with that IP address. These addressing and routing rules are found in the Domain Name System (DNS).

The core of the DNS is a vast, two-column table of domain names and IP addresses. When you type "askbobrankin.com" into your browser's address bar, here is what happens:

The browser sends "askbobrankin.com" to a DNS server along with a request: "What's the IP address that corresponds to "askbobrankin.com?'" The DNS server consults its table and sends the answer if it has one. If the DNS server can't find the answer, it sends the request to a higher-level DNS server that has more names and addresses. The request keeps getting kicked up to a higher level DNS server until the answer is found, if it exists. In the whole wide world, there are only 13 "root" DNS servers that know every name and address pair. Most DNS requests are resolved (successfully answered) at much lower levels.

When your browser receives the correct IP address, it sends a request for Web content to that address using the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) or HTTPS protocol. (The latter specifies that certain security measures be taken to protect the privacy of communications; see below). When the Web server at that IP address gets the request, it collects the requested data and sends it back to the requesting browser's IP address.

Sorry, No Teleportation (Yet)

So let me clear up a misconception (or at least a misnomer) here. You don't really "go to" a Web page, and likewise, there are no "site visitors." Web pages come to you in response to your browser's requests, just as packages come to you from Amazon in response to your purchase orders. To use the physical mail analogy, it's like sending a postcard from New York to Paris, asking for a picture of the Eiffel Tower. Someone in Paris receives that request and sends back a postcard with the photo. You've got the photo of the Eiffel Tower, but you never actually visited Paris.

A Web page may consist of thousands or millions of bytes of data. They don't all arrive at once in one massive package. The data your browser requests is broken up into blocks of 1,000 to 1,500 bytes. Each block is packaged with header and footer information that specify where it's going, what larger body of data it comes from, and where it fits in the jigsaw puzzle of blocks that will have to be re-assembled at the destination address.

Data blocks rarely follow each other in single file over the same path from a server to the machine that requested them. Instead, each packet of data is sent along the path of least resistance (fastest speed) by each router that handles it on its way back to you. So that postcard in my analogy would actually be torn into bits, each labeled with the destination address, and then reassembled upon arrival.

The illusion that you are visiting a website in Paris, London or Rome is created by software. Or if you prefer, magic. Clarke's Third Law states: "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

What About Security?

In theory, any data traveling across the internet can be seen by persons who have access to the computers or routers in the local network or internet backbone. On a public WiFi connection, you are even more exposed, because everything you can see in your web browser or email program is also visible to others on the same wifi network. In practical terms, that means everyone in the same coffee shop, airport lounge, library or hotel.

The answer is encryption. When the web address shown in your browser says HTTPS instead of HTTP, it means your data is encrypted before hitting the internet. To anyone who might be "sniffing," it will appear as a random jumble of numbers and letters.

The HTTPS protocol combines HTTP with a security protocol called TLS/SSL. Actually, TLS (Transport Layer Security) is a modern, more secure replacement for SSL (Secure Sockets Layer), but both are commonly used and so appear together. Using digital certificates and public key encryption technology, TLS/SSL first authenticates the destination server, verifying that it is indeed "askbobrankin.com" and not a malware-spewing imposter. Then an encrypted "tunnel" is created between the destination server and the requesting host machine, through which data is exchanged safely from eavesdropping. The math involved is mind-bogglingly complex, but that need not concern mere mortals.

All the extra activity of authentication, encryption, and decryption of data adds some

overhead to an Internet communication stream and the machines on each end. The Web may seem a bit slower, but the added security and privacy are more than worth the sacrifice. Using a secure HTTPS connection is standard for most websites these days.

I hope that gives you a better idea of what's happening under the hood while you surf the Web, chat with friends and exchange emails.

Here's a little history of the Internet, along with a summary of how it is managed today.

ARPANET, the precursor to the Internet, was developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was a cooperative effort of the U.S. Department of Defense, several universities, and private corporations. By the early 1980s, a set of standards for connecting diverse networks around the world was developed and became known as the Internet.

In 1992, The Internet Society was formed as a non-profit organization to provide leadership for the development and use of the Internet. The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), which operates under the auspices of the Internet Society, develops and promotes Internet standards and protocols.

In 1998, The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was formed to coordinate the management of Internet Domain Name System (DNS), under an agreement with the IETF. The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) is a department of ICANN that oversees IP address allocation globally and manages the root DNS servers.

"Where Wizards Stay Up Late: The Origins Of The Internet," tells the story of the origins of the Internet, based on interviews with the people who made it happen. Perhaps you've never heard of Bob Taylor, Vint Cerf or J.R. Licklider but after reading this book, you'll want to thank them. Some other interesting history can be found at the Internet Society's History of the Internet web page. ❖

Voice Commands
(Continued from Page 6)

information on the page and then continue.

After you perform the actions of setting up your microphone, click Next again. You will be instructed to read the following text aloud, *Peter dictates to his computer. He prefers it to typing, and particularly prefers it to pen and paper.* After reading that aloud, you can click on Next again, read the information on that page, and then again on the next page. You will be taken to a page where the title is **Set up Speech Recognition**, and you now choose one of the two options: **Enable document review** or **Disable document review**. Which you choose depends on your concern for privacy.

After clicking Next again, you are taken to a page where you pick an activation mode: **Manual activation mode** or **Voice activation mode**. After that, you are taken to a page where you can view or print the voice commands you can use. Then you move on to a page where you can choose to **Run Speech Recognition at startup**. Finally, you are taken to a page where you can choose between **Start tutorial** and **Skip tutorial**; the differences between the uses of each option are explained, and this ends the setup phase.

Now you can control the computer with your voice. ❖

CASH FLOW
as of February 28, 2018
Charlotte Semple, Treasurer

Total Assets	$7,834.70
Receipts	
Member Dues	714.00
Total Gross Receipts	$714.00
Expenses	
Newsletter	209.75
Facilities Rental	60.00
Verizon Wireless	50.08
General Meeting Suplies	8.52
LACS Mailbox, annual	252.00
Total Expenses	$580.35
Current Total Assets	$7,968.35

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Westchester United Method-
ist Church Fellowship Hall
8065 Emerson Ave.
Los Angeles CA 90045

From the North:

Take Sepulveda Blvd.
SOUTH to W. 80th St. Turn
WEST/right. Go about one
mile to Emerson Ave. Turn
SOUTH/left. Go one long
block to W. 80th Place. It is
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Emerson and W. 80th Place.

From the South, East or West:
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Go about eight blocks to W.
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There is street parking and a
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church.