User Friendly

*LACS
A Computer and
Technology
User Group*

IN THIS ISSUE

APCUG EVENTS

Watch your email for APCUG workshops and other upcoming events.

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG

www.apcug2.org
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www.twitter.com/apcug
www.youtube.com/apcugvideos

An International
Association of Technology
and Computer User Groups

JULY 12, 2022 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 - 9:00 PM - via Zoom
Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30 - 7:00
Topic: Social Media for Seniors
Speaker: Judy Taylour, President
SCV Computer Club, CA
APCUG Speaker and Regional Advisor

What is social media? Do you want to find old friends, make new friends, and keep up with what your children and grandchildren are doing? What should you share or not share? How often should you post, and more will be covered in this presentation. Plus, social media, doctors say, is also healthy, because it keeps seniors mentally and socially vital.

Meet Our Presenter

Judy Taylour is Chair of several APCUG committees. She has spoken to us on Ergonomics, Digital Asset Estate Planning, The Cloud, and Troubleshooting Your Computer 101. Judy is a 33-year member of the Santa Clarita Valley (now SCV) Computer Club where she serves as President, Editor and Webmaster. She is also cofacilitator for the Southern California Regional User Group Summit (SCRUGS), a group of local computer clubs that met quarterly for over 20 years to share ideas and presenter information and solve problems. Judy taught adult education computer classes for 22 years through her local high school district. She is a member of the Pierce College Computer Applications and Office Technologies Advisory Committee that meets annually to suggest courses and hardware for the next school year. Judy is a firm believer in life-long learning.

Tuesday, July 12, 7:00—9:00 PM Via Zoom

6:30—7:00 Socializing and informal Q&A

LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link on or about July 10. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net before July 10.
More information about LACS is at www.lacspc.org.

🌼 FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR 🌼

Happy Fourth of July

On July 4, we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. If you haven't read it since a high school history class, maybe you would like to read it now. Here is a little excerpt from it.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed...

WELCOME ALL LACS NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Gavin Faught, LACS Treasurer
New Members (1)
   Larry McDavid
Renewals (5)
   Loling Beckman*
   Janet Chesne*   Sheila Moncavage
   James Somerville   Annette Tossounian
   *Contributor

Learning never exhausts the mind.
~
Leonardo da Vinci

CALLING ALL LACS MEMBERS

➡️ As your editor, I am asking LACS members for short, i.e. less than 300 words, computer and other technology-related articles for User Friendly. We can all benefit from your experience.

Members Helping Members is our motto.

Have you used, or do you have:

- Software that you love or hate? Tell us about it.
- Favorite apps or utilities?
- Hardware or electronic gadgets you can't live without?
- Any tips to share?
- Something you just learned?

You may just give me the facts or an outline, so you won't need to be concerned with grammar, punctuation, etc.

We thank you for sharing with us.

➡️ LACS is always looking for interesting and helpful presentations for our general meetings. What would you like to hear?

Do you know anyone, maybe yourself, who could share with us computer or technical-related knowledge? Maybe digital photography, genealogy, smart home apps, hobbies, medical or science, TV, any how-to's?

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
June 14, 2022
By **Leah Clark,** LACS President/Editor
Topic: **Guide to Windows 11**
Speaker: **Bill James**
Computer Club of Oklahoma City
APCUG Advisor and Speaker

I was sorry that I had to miss Bill James' presentation on Windows 11. But with many thanks to Judy Taylour, our APCUG Region 10 advisor, I can listen to the recording and write this summary. LACS members and guests received the recording of the meeting, so they can hear the entire presentation.

Before the meeting start time, there was technical discussion about Thunderbolt 4 ports, USB ports, and cables. Judy recommended getting a solar charger to be prepared if electricity goes out.

Bill James demonstrated the changes that came with Windows 11. We had thought that Windows 10 would be the last version of Windows, but then came Windows 11 in October of 2021. Change can be difficult for people; some can't wait to update and others prefer the status quo.

There are significant differences between Windows 10 and 11.

- Windows 11 is faster
- Windows 11 is 64 bytes only
- Windows 10 needs 32 GB storage, Win 11 64 GB
- You must have a Microsoft account with Win 11
- The new design of Windows is simplified.

Bill took us through a brief history of the Windows versions.

The Taskbar
You can't move the taskbar – it will always be on the bottom.

The start button is in the center of the taskbar, but it can be moved to the left. Right click on the taskbar for Task Bar Settings > Personalization > Taskbar behaviors to choose to move it to the left. You can also hide the taskbar, select what you want to be displayed on the taskbar, and select other taskbar settings.

When you click on the spyglass icon in the taskbar to search, you will enter your search on the top, rather than in the box on the bottom as in Windows 10. You can define your search by clicking on All, Apps, Documents, Web, or More.

The timeline showing your activity in Windows 10 is no longer in Windows 11, where you now just see your open applications and virtual desktops. You can pin apps of your choice to the taskbar.

Start Menu
When you click on the Start icon, you see your pinned applications, recently used apps, and user information rather than the tiles in Win 10. Bill showed how to customize the selection and arrangement of the icons, and how to add icons to the bottom portion of the start menu.

File Explorer
Windows 11 has changed how File Explorer looks. Bill showed how to customize the display. He demonstrated Quick Access and details of other options in File Explorer.

The biggest changes in Windows 11 are in File Explorer, the Start Menu, and the Taskbar.

You can also run Android apps in Win 11, by downloading the Google Play Store.

Bill discussed syncing your Android phone to your PC in "Your Phone" to be able to read and reply to texts on your PC, using a full-size keyboard. *See User Friendly, June 2022, page 2.*

Settings has been totally redone. Settings compares with the old Control Panel, but it has more personalization options available. Bill suggested clicking on the different categories to see what's there. You will learn as you go.

After the presentation, there was a lot of discussion on backing up. Bill and others use OneDrive to sync all their files and folders. A lot of friendly and technical discussion took place past 9:00 PM.

Photos from the June 14 LACS Zoom Meeting
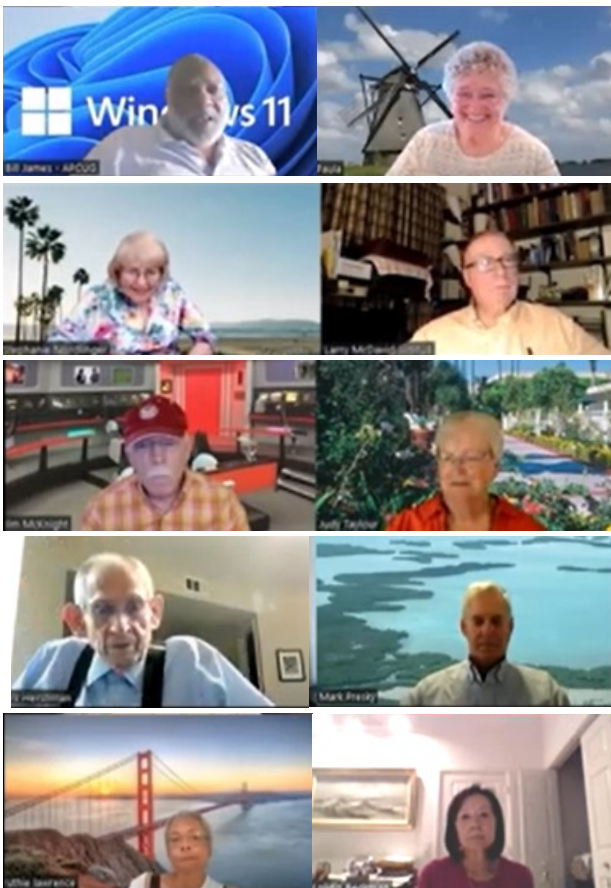
Los Angeles Computer Society

Windows 11
by
Bill James, VP Operations
Computer Club of Oklahoma City
APCUG Advisor, Region 8

June 14, 2022

INKJET PRINTER INK CARTRIDGES

By **Jeff Wilkinson,** President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV
https://www.scscc.club
pres.scscc (at) gmail.com

Two ink deposition methods are widely used in household inkjet printers: thermal bubble and piezoelectric.

Thermal Bubble Printing

Inkjet printing technology was proposed as early as 1960 and became commercially available in the early 1980s in the Canon Bubblejet and the HP Digital Printer. In March 1993, Epson entered the inkjet printer market with Micro Piezo inkjet technology using a piezoelectric crystal in each ink nozzle.

With the bubblejet technology, current is passed through a resistor in the nozzle path, heating the ink, vaporizing it, and depositing a small amount of ink on the media. As a result, a slight vacuum is created, drawing more ink into the nozzle for the next cycle. This happens as often as 36,000 times per second.
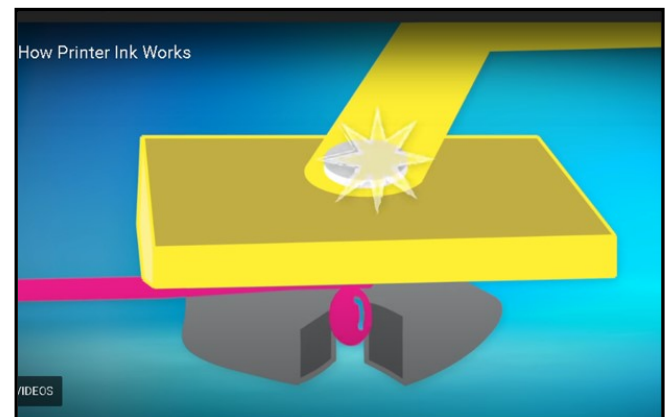
Using "bubblejet" technology, the typical ink cartridge has hundreds of tiny holes or nozzles, about 15 microns in size. The precision digital manufacturing process ensures the nozzles are correctly sized and placed on the printhead for correct placement of the ejected drops. As small as 4-picoliters, the tiny ink drops are launched through these precision

nozzles. A picolitre is a millionth of a millionth of a liter! As many as 32 drops of ink are used to produce each color dot, and images may contain thousands upon thousands of dots. Therefore, the chemical formulation of the ink is very important, and poorly formulated inks may cause clogging or oxidation on the print-head nozzle.

Partially because of the complexity and development costs and a somewhat captive market, the price of inkjet cartridges was initially quite high. This spawned a compatible cartridge market in which vendors, big and small, qualified and not so qualified, began offering replacement inkjet cartridges. However, their only option was to refill inkjet cartridges with the existing patents, since a replacement could not be legally manufactured. This created a secondary market for empty inkjet cartridges with various recycling and collection schemes used to get cartridges to refill.

As the compatible market matured, the OEM manufacturers added protection in the form of a semiconductor chip used to prohibit non-OEM cartridges. Of course, workarounds appeared almost immediately, and the back and forth battle has been going on for many years. There is no question the best quality comes from OEM ink cartridges. Still, many users feel that the cost/quality ratio is too high for everyday printing and opt for compatible cartridges. Furthermore, since the printing functionality comes almost entirely from the cartridge, a faulty cartridge can be replaced to renew the entire imaging system.

Piezoelectric Printing

Epson inkjet printers use the piezoelectric process in their printers. With this process, the printer contains the printheads rather than the printheads being part of the cartridge. Printheads have a piezoelectric element in the printer that contracts when a voltage is applied. The element and vibration plate move, much like the loudspeaker's cone, and force a precise amount of ink out of the nozzle.

The contracting piezoelectric element moves the vibration plate

Piezo element ——— Vibration plate   EPSON
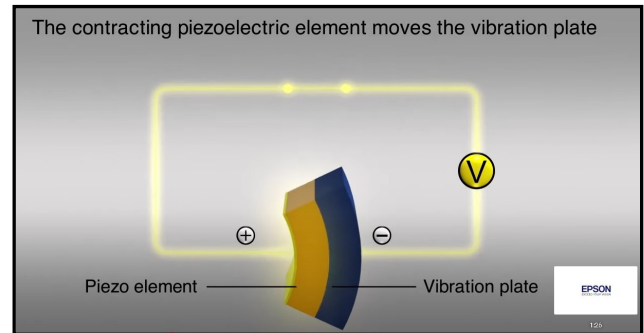
This eliminates the need to heat the ink to create a bubble, reducing the complexity of the ink formulation. Printheads with 128 black nozzles and 192 color nozzles (64 for each color) produce a resolution of 720 dpi, for example.
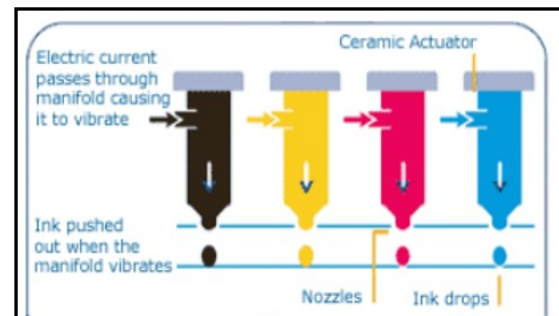
Since the ink does not need to be heated, it can be tailored to the media to which it is applied, in many cases giving more flexibility to the ink formulation.
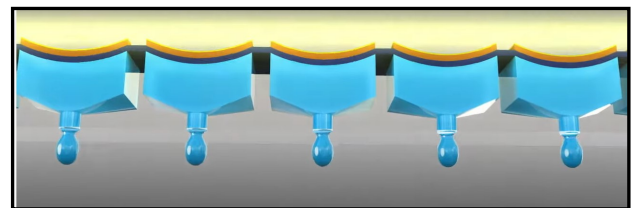
The internal printheads contain rows of these elements, which fire at precisely the right time, releasing the correct amount of ink as many as 40,000 times per second!

Since the ink cartridges for these printers do not contain the printhead, they are easier to duplicate, and many compatible cartridges are available. However, once again, the manufacturer has countered these efforts with onboard chips that warn you about using third-party inks.

Printer manufacturers have made numerous attempts to use firmware and onboard chips that won't allow the use of third-party inks. There have been multiple corresponding class-action lawsuits against these actions.

Each user must choose which ink cartridges to use. Being armed with some understanding of the printer ink systems you can add, lets you make a more informed decision. ❖

WHAT IS A SERVER?
The workhorse of the internet
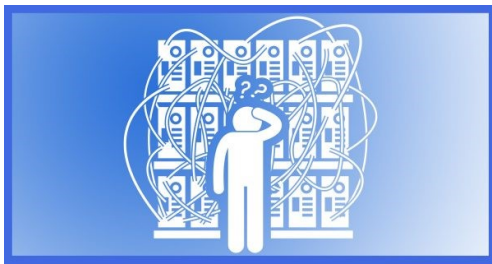by Leo A. Notenboom
https://askleo.com/

Image: canva.com

The term "server" is used a lot in many contexts, but it's really just a computer.

So, What Is a Server, Anyway?

The word *server* gets thrown around a lot.

We hear about web servers, print servers, mail servers, dedicated servers, shared servers, and more.

While it might have gotten confusing, it's not really that mysterious. Servers are very common. You're probably using one right now.

Servers are computers — often very similar to the computers we use ourselves — but often optimized to perform specific tasks in service to others.

A computer that Serves

A server is nothing more than a computer providing, or "serving up", services or resources to other computers.

There's nothing special about being a server. If your computer has file sharing enabled and other computers on your local network can copy files to and from it, then your computer is a file server.

Things get confusing because the general term "server" often means a computer optimized for a particular purpose.

Computers with a specialty

Your computer may be a file server, but is it a *good* file server?

Is it optimized to provide fast access to lots of files to hundreds or thousands of other computers? Probably not. It doesn't need to be.

There are computers optimized to be extraordinarily efficient at that job. They may look and operate like your computer, but they probably have high-speed network connections, extremely fast hard disks, more processors, and so on. They're optimized to be good at what they do: serve files.

The things that don't matter, like video or sound hardware, might be bare bones if present at all.

They may be called "file servers", but they're just computers with a specialty.

Various Specialties

Your ISP's **mail server** is just a computer optimized to handle email.

That might mean it has lots of disk space for all the spam. It could mean it has redundant components to reduce the possibility of lost email because of catastrophic failure. It almost certainly means it has an efficient connection to the internet.

A **print server**? It's just a computer optimized for printing. It probably has lots of disk space for spooled print files. Printing is a somewhat slow operation, so maybe the disks themselves need not be as fast as that of a file server. If it serves up multiple printers, it needs enough connections to actually communicate with each printer.

Web servers? Because web access is actually just a kind of file access, web servers might look a lot like file servers: large fast hard disks, good network connections, and so on.

Dedicated Versus Shared

Dedicated or *shared* are terms commonly used when discussing web hosting. You can host your website on a machine shared with many others, or on a machine dedicated to just you. It depends on your needs.

Ask Leo!, for example, is on a dedicated server. It's my most important site, and I want it to be as fast and available as my budget allows. Other sites, like Not All News Is Bad, or 7 Takeaways, and more, all live on a different server together with even more websites.

Shared also means something else. When a single server or service, regardless of how it's hosted, makes resources available to others, those resources are said to be *shared out* or just *shared*. For example, I have an older computer in my basement that has 10 external hard disks connected, which it makes available or "shares" those disks on my local network for other computers to use.

Very large websites and services may use multiple servers to spread the load. For example, "outlook.com" appears to be a single website, but it likely lives on dozens, if not hundreds, of dedicated physical servers.

For related links, videos, and comments, visit What Is a Server? on Ask Leo! ❖

A FEW ABBREVIATIONS

Compiled by **Leah Clark**, LACS president

CPU — Central Processing Unit
HTML — Hypertext Markup Language
ISP — Internet Service Provider
LAN — Local Area Network
PCB — Printed Circuit Board
WAN — Wide Area Network

CAN YOU GET A VIRUS FROM A QR CODE?

By **Bob Rankin**
AskBobRankin.com
Bob Rankin is a translator for the technology impaired -- a writer and computer programmer who enjoys exploring the Internet and explaining technology in plain English.

You know a technology is catching on when malware creeps start using it to snare unwary users. QR codes, those little squares of black and white patterns that you see in various places are typically benign shortcuts for mobile users, but they can carry a nasty (and expensive) payload.

QR Code Malware?

QR codes encode website addresses in a format that can be scanned and deciphered by the camera app on most smartphones. Instead of typing that URL into your phone's browser, you just snap a picture of a QR code and be whisked to an informative Web page, a restaurant menu... or a malicious site that silently downloads a virus, or siphons data from your phone.

In January of this year, the FBI warned about malware delivered via QR codes. The end result could be theft of data from the phone, a malware download, or redirection to a malicious site, which prompts the victim to enter login credentials or financial information. The latter case is just a twist on email phishing scams, but they use a QR code to obscure the link. In the past, I've read about mobile malware capable of sending SMS messages from the infected phone to a premium-priced number, and others that scoop up your contacts list and send spam emails in your name.

Can a QR code itself contain malware? Theoretically, yes, but it wouldn't do much. A QR code can contain only a limited amount

LACS NOTICES

TO PAY YOUR DUES VIA PAYPAL

Go to this link:

www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024

and then click on **Send**. You'll be asked to log in to your PayPal account or sign up for a PayPal account so that PayPal will know where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Once you have entered your dues amount, please click on **Add a note**. This is where you will give any updated information: physical address, email address, phone number. Please also add what type of dues you are paying: regular, electronic *User Friendly*, contributor, etc. Tell us if you don't want your contact information published in the roster. If you have any questions, email Gavin Faught at gmfaught@gmail.com

HOW TO JOIN OUR MAIL LISTS

LACS has two Groups.io email lists that all members can and should join to get the most out of their memberships.

- **PC** is for official LACS business including notices of and links to our general meetings.

- **LACSLIST** is for any other computer or technology-related questions, answers or comments.

New LACS members will receive an invitation to join our lists. If you do not respond to the invitation by its 2-week deadline, you can contact Stephanie at nordlacs (at) AOL.com with your request to join.

The instructions on our website and previously in User Friendly do not consistently work. We are trying to find the right formula. Please watch your email and User Friendly for updates on joining the LACS mail lists.

These groups are a benefit of membership, so don't ask to be included unless you are a current paid member.

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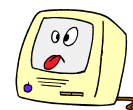
LACS member and presenter, **Jim McKnight**, has an open offer to LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free. There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

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.

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** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out, and email it with your changes to membership@lacspc.org or snail-mail it to

The Los Angeles Computer Society
11664 National Blvd. #343
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802.

ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

LACS members who are on our PC mail list will receive a link, meeting ID, Passcode, and instructions to attend the LACS general meetings a couple of days before the meeting. **Please let Leah Clark know by the morning of the meeting if you don't have it or have any problem.**

You can put an icon to the link on your desktop so it's handy at meeting time.

1. Right-click a blank spot on your desktop.
2. Select **New** from the drop-down menu.
3. Select **Shortcut**.
4. Type or copy and paste the link in the box that says "Type the location of the item."
5. Click **Next**.
6. Type a name for the shortcut.

LACS CALENDAR

LACS Board Meeting

There will be no board meeting in July.

LACS GENERAL MEETING

Date: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 via Zoom
Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)
Please arrive early so we can start on time.
Where: At your home or wherever you are

July 04: Independence Day
July 12: LACS General Meeting

VISIT OTHER COMPUTER USER GROUPS

Check out the URL below for information for visiting other user groups' Zoom and hybrid meetings, a list of groups open to other groups, and for tips and ideas for using and joining Zoom meetings.

https://apcug2.org/tech-things-to-learn-while-sheltering-in-place/

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS VIA ZOOM

July 12: Social Media for Seniors
      Judy Taylour
August 9: TBA
Check your email and *User Friendly* for updates to this schedule.

ZOOM MEETINGS

Members on our PC email list will receive, via email, an invitation to join LACS Zoom general meetings. Click on the URL on the invitation before the meeting and follow the prompts.
Contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net if you have any questions or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day.

ZOOM RECORDINGS

LACS members will receive links to the recordings of Zoom meetings via email.

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the colored editions) in User Friendly usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Copy and paste it to the address bar, or click on the link on the online version to see the reference.

USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES AND INDEXES

To see back issues of *User Friendly,* go to http://www.lacspc.org/category/user-friendly/.

For indexes to past issues, go to https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/

To find a specific article or topic, use the search box on the top right.

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 contact a person whose number is listed next to it. **Find a helper's email address and phone number on your roster**. If you don't have your roster, call 424-261-6251. Only members in good standing may receive a roster. We hope that you find this LACS free service useful.

If you are experienced using a particular program or hardware, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert. To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please email Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net or call her at 424-261-6251.

More Quick Consultants, and more categories are always needed. Do we have anyone who can help with Google apps? It won't take a lot of time, and you may decline or postpone a call if it comes at an inconvenient time.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF, InDesign, Photoshop, etc. - 10
Android Smartphones - 8
Apple devices - 11
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3
Genealogy - 8
Groups.IO - 8

Hardware - 7
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7
Mozilla Firefox - 7
MS Excel - 8, 11, 12
MS Word - 1, 3, 8, 12
MS Outlook - 8, 1, 10
MS PowerPoint - 8, 11
MS Publisher - 2

Photoshop - 10
Quicken - 8, 12
Thunderbird - 7
Utilities - 7, 8
Visual Basic - 5
Websites - 5
Windows - 7, 8
WordPerfect - 8
Zoom - 2, 9

Number	Name	Preferred Time for Phone Calls	
		From	To
1	Beckman, Loling	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Clark, Leah	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Hershman, Irv	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
5	Ialongo, Gilbert	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
7	McKnight, Jim	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
8	Nordlinger, Stephanie	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
9	Presky, Mark	Any	Any
10	Rozek, E. J.	Noon	8:00 PM
11	Van Berkom, Paula	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
12	Wilder, Joan	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

Note: Times are Pacific Times

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

TITLE	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2022
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2022
Secretary	Marcia Jacobs	2022
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2022
Director	Sylvia Davis	2022
Director	Howard Krivoy	2022
Director	Mark Presky	2022
Director	Irv Hershman	2023
Director	Emil Rozek	2023
Director	Annette Tossounian	2023
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2023
APCUG Rep.	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
CCSC Computer Lab	Loling Beckman	
Database Manager	Sylvia Davis	
Groups.IO Email Lists	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity – Press	Mark Presky	
Publicity – Online Media	Open	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom	

Mailing Address: 11664 National Blvd., #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802

Website: www.lacspc.org

Contact the President/Editor at 424-261-6251. Follow the prompts. This is a Google Voice number.

Please use your roster for email addresses and phone numbers to contact any officer, board member or other member, or you may leave a message at the above number. If you don't have your roster, please contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net and she will email you a copy. Only LACS members may receive a roster.

HERE'S HOW CAR WI-FI WORKS

By **Cory Gunthe**
Review Geek, June 2022

*structuresxx/
Shuttestock.com*

These days having reliable access to the internet is pretty essential, and that includes while you're in a car. Thankfully, car Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly more common, but it's not always clear how it works, how fast it is, or if you (and passengers) can use it when the car is off.

Many new vehicles come with in-car Wi-Fi, but it's usually only a free trial to show owners how great the feature is. Once that trial expires, you'll have to decide if it's worth keeping. Plus, most electric vehicles rely on that connection for software updates, fancy features, and more. It's not just for streaming Netflix on a tablet for the kids.

So, whether you're considering enabling car Wi-Fi on your new ride, or are simply looking for more information, here's a quick explainer of how car Wi-Fi works.

How Does Car Wi-Fi Work?
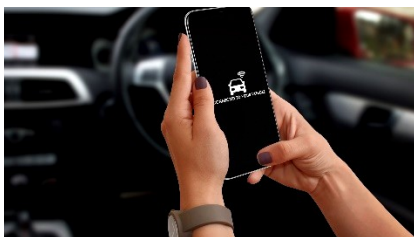
*Nikola Stanisic/
Shuttestock.com*

If your new car has Wi-Fi or you recently added internet to your vehicle, you're likely wondering how it works. Contrary to popular belief, car Wi-Fi systems use the same connections as your phone, which is cellular connectivity.

Even OnStar, which does use Global Positioning Systems (GPS) satellite technology to track your vehicle, relies on cellular carriers such as AT&T, T-Mobile, or Verizon for Wi-Fi in cars. Maps and navigation often use GPS, while streaming movies, TV, or music relies on a 3G or 4G LTE cellular data connection. Whether you added Wi-Fi yourself or the car came with it, it'll connect to the internet the same way your phone does.

Your car essentially has a chipset similar to what's inside a smartphone, and that modem chip talks to and interacts with cell towers throughout the United States. You or your passengers can connect to the in-car Wi-Fi the same way as connecting to Wi-Fi at home, a hotel, or a nearby coffee shop.

You likely use a dedicated internet service provider (ISP) at home, often with hardwired cables and a Wi-Fi router. Your laptop connects to that signal. A vehicle connects to the internet through a cellular data connection, then broadcasts the cellular data signal to nearby devices using your car as a mobile hotspot. See the difference?

On a smartphone, tablet, or infotainment system, you search for and find the Wi-Fi network name of your vehicle, enter a password, and you're all set. Your car's dash should connect independently, but you'll need to manually connect other devices like a tablet or laptop.

Many newer vehicles from Ford and Tesla have cellular connectivity for Wi-Fi but can also connect to nearby hotspots in town from AT&T, Comcast, or other partners and providers. But that's your vehicle connecting to nearby wireless access points without using its built-in connection.

Does Wi-Fi Work When Your Car Is Off?

If you're wondering if in-car Wi-Fi works when the car is off, we have that covered too. This question can be tricky as it varies depending on the vehicle manufacturer. However, for the

Chesky/ Shutter- stock.com

most part, car Wi-Fi works as long as you have the key turned to the *ON* position.

Your car doesn't have to be on with the engine running to have internet access, just like it doesn't have to be running for the radio to turn on. In-Car Wi-Fi modems will turn on when you turn the key and use battery power.

Remember that you don't want to sit for too long and use a car's radio or Wi-Fi when the vehicle isn't running, as you'll eventually run the battery down.

How Far Does Car Wi-Fi Work?

Tesla

Another myth is that car Wi-Fi works any-where, even out in the wilderness, where a smartphone won't be able to get online or make phone calls. A family member of mine recently bought a new Chevy truck and ex-pected it to have internet access while we went out for a camping trip, but for the majority of built-in systems, that's not the case.

While you *can* buy a fancy satellite-based in-ternet plan for your vehicle, almost all auto manufacturers in the United States deliver Wi-Fi (car connectivity) through AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, or other mobile internet providers and their cell towers. This means if you're some-where where a phone won't work, your car's internet won't work either.

What about using your car Wi-Fi from a dis-tance, like at the park? You can get internet from your vehicle while sitting in the back seat or at a nearby park bench as long as you're not too far away. Most in-vehicle inter-net systems can transmit a Wi-Fi signal up to 30 feet away.

Think of it like this. You can probably access your Wi-Fi at home from the backyard or the garage, but the connectivity drops if you go too far away. Many car Wi-Fi systems with the hotspot feature work the same way. If the car is on and you've activated the hotspot, you can connect to it even when you're not inside the car. Just don't wander too far away from the vehicle.

If you've been debating whether or not you should get car Wi-Fi, just know it's totally worth it. Once you realize how useful it can be for day-to-day driving, road trips, stream-ing, scheduling service appointments, or keeping up with maintenance, you'll never want to go without it.

As long as you know what to expect and where car Wi-Fi and hotspots will work, you'll be fine.

Cory Gunther has been writing about phones, Android, cars, and technology in general for over a decade. He's a staff writer for Review Geek covering roundups, EVs, and news. He's previously written for Gotta-BeMobile, SlashGear, AndroidCentral, and InputMag. He's written over 9,000 articles. ❖

SOME NOTES ABOUT WEBSITES: RUNNING HTTPS

By **Curt Trout,** Vice President
Twin Cities PC Users' Group, MN
The Digital Viking
https://tcpc.com/newsletters, June, page 3

For reasons outside the scope of this discussion, the world of the internet is moving from the HTTP protocol to the HTTPS protocol. As a result, browsers are beginning to warn users that sites that do not use the HTTPS protocol are "unsecure." It used to be that using HTTPS required difficult and intricate procedures, along with the purchase of security certificates that together could be relatively costly for small websites and the organizations that operate them.

These notes may help people understand what HTTPS is and, more importantly, to describe ways to utilize HTTPS on small websites hosted on shared hosting facilities.

What is HTTPS?

Hypertext transfer protocol secure (HTTPS) is the secure version of HTTP, which is the primary protocol used to send data between a web browser and a website. HTTPS is encrypted to increase the security of data transfer… https://www.cloudflare.com/learning/ssl/what-is-https/

What is Shared Hosting?

Shared hosting is one of the least expensive ways to purchase hosting facilities for a website. It usually allows multiple websites to be hosted in a single account and multiple accounts to be hosted on a single web server.

How does HTTPS Work?
A simple explanation, viewed from 10,000 feet

When a browser (common browsers include: Microsoft's Edge, Apple's Safari, Google's Chrome, Mozilla's Firefox, and many, many more) sends a request to connect with a web server using HTTPS, the browser and the web server exchange credentials designed to verify that the website is what the website proclaims to be. This involves the exchange of a certificate from a "Certificate Authority" along with processing associated public and private encryption keys. Once the connection has been determined to be valid, all traffic between the browser and web server is encrypted so that the data is unintelligible to other viewers.

"Certificate Authorities" are validated based upon credentials built into the browsers.

Conventional SSL Certificates

Traditionally, certificates were issued and purchased from Certificate Authorities for all certificate types. There are three general types of certificates:

1. Domain Validation SSL Certificates (DV)

These are the simplest and easiest certificates to obtain. They validate that the purchaser/requestor of the certificate has control over the domain for which the certificate is requested, i.e., the domain has been validated. Validation requires that the requestor be able to make changes to the domain for which the certificate is requested and that the certificate verifies those changes. Simply put: it prevents me from getting a certificate for your domain unless you allow it.

2. Organization Validation SSL Certificates (OV)

OV certificates add a level of security (implied trust) to certificates because they require the certification authority to authenticate the legitimacy of an organization beyond what is necessary for a DV certificate.

Websites involved in eCommerce should use DV certificates or higher. The use of OV certificates is outside the scope of this discussion.

3. Extended Validation SSL Certificates (EV)

Extended Validation (EV) SSL certificates provide the highest level of trust and are the industry standard for business websites.

Different Types of SSL Certificates Explained at https://sectigo.com/resource-library/different-types-of-ssl-certificates-explained

Websites involved in eCommerce should use EV certificates. However, the use of EV certificates is, again, outside the scope of this discussion.

Game Changers: *Let's Encrypt* and *cPanel* DV Certificate Facilities

Regardless of whether we use Let's Encrypt or cPanel to automatically generate and maintain our free DV SSL certificates, we owe a great debt of gratitude to those people and organizations who founded the Let's Encrypt Project.

The **Let's Encrypt** project was started in 2012 by two Mozilla employees, Josh Aas and Eric Rescorla, together with Peter Eckersley at the Electronic Frontier Foundation and J. Alex Halderman at the University of Michigan. Internet Security Research Group, the company behind Let's Encrypt, was incorporated in May 2013. (Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Let%27s_Encrypt)

Let's Encrypt revolutionized the generation and automated the process of handling DV SSL certificates in the following and other ways.

- It created free certificates. It was no longer necessary to purchase certificates from Certificate Authorities. EVERYONE could now afford to use HTTPS on web servers that supported the service.

- It provided automatic certificate generation and management on the hosting computer. Conventional certificate handling is complicated and time-consuming when new certificates are needed, typically annually.

While Let's Encrypt worked very well, it had at least one drawback. The means used to automate the validation of a domain used a couple of custom directories and files. As a result, websites, depending upon the website's structure, were required to make changes to

the .htaccess file (an important server configuration file) to prevent the website's code from trying to process the special Let's Encrypt files and allow the webserver to serve these special files during validation. The hosting company I and my clients use automated this process, which worked well but it made the .htaccess file more difficult to understand and to modify correctly.

Also, since Let's Encrypt is free, it took away the sales of SSL certificates from the hosting company. I, and my clients, moved from a very good hosting company just because they repeatedly refused to support Let's Encrypt, probably because of the loss of this revenue. We moved to another good hosting provider that supported and provided Let's Encrypt.

cPanel: cPanel is both the name of a company and its product. It provides a management facility that allows one web server to operate many (into the thousands) client accounts on a single server and allows those accounts to run multiple websites. It's not an exaggeration to say that cPanel is used by many/most web hosting companies to support their shared hosting accounts.

Within the past few years (I believe, exactly when isn't important), cPanel became a certificate authority and implemented what they call AutoSSL. So, when cPanel is used to manage a website, it doesn't need to do any domain verification; it's running the domain! That allows it to manage SSL certificates automatically without the cumbersome special files required by Let's Encrypt. And, for those who support the websites using cPanel's certificates, there are no modifications to the .htaccess files!

So, what do I recommend? If your hosting company supports cPanel's AutoSSL: use it! If your hosting company doesn't support cPanel's AutoSSL but supports Let's Encrypt: use Let's Encrypt. If your hosting com-

pany doesn't support either of these services, then it's time to move to another hosting company. Contact me, and I can make a recommendation and maybe a little commission. Please realize that I won't recommend anything I don't use.

Certificate Periods and Problems

Every SSL certificate has a valid time period. That is, it contains a date/time upon which the certificate becomes valid and the date/time after which the certificate is invalid. The certificate can only be used between these two times.

Traditionally, certificates are issued for one-year. However, it's not uncommon to find certificates issued for other periods, e.g., multiple years or even unusual beginning and ending dates. This is particularly true for purchased certificates because of the overhead of generating and installing them.

A certificate can be canceled or expired by creating a new certificate with another expiration date.

However, there's a problem affecting a certificate expiration/cancellation before the end of the original time period. This is because browsers may cache certificate validations, i.e., retaining the certificate and its expiration. Once validated, this validation may be used without checking for a possible revocation (it doesn't happen often, but it does happen). So, short certificates, e.g., three months, are better, from a security standpoint, than long certificates, e.g., five years.

Since Let's Encrypt and cPanel have automated the process of generating and installing certificates, and there's no payment requirement, both can routinely issue certificates that are valid for relatively short periods of time; they both use 90-day periods.

Here's what they do: Twice a day, every 12 hours, they scan all the certificates on a server, looking for those that will expire within 30 days. If they find one, they create and install a new certificate that's good for 90 days from the current date.

Looking at this schedule, you might ask: Why do they create a new certificate so early? Why not wait until the end of the 90 days? It's a fault-tolerant mechanism; if a certificate doesn't renew after 60 days, it'll get checked again in 12 more hours or another 12 hours. The exact number of checks is irrelevant. The frequency of these checks ensures that a new certificate gets generated and installed long before the old one expires. Rather clever, I think.

One more thing

Warning: Tech Talk Ahead

Just because you enable HTTPS on your website, that doesn't necessarily mean that HTTPS will always be used; it's still possible to service requests using HTTP. Therefore, it is advisable to modify the .htaccess file in the mod_rewrite section to cause HTTP requests to be rewritten to the equivalent HTTPS URL (i.e., permanently moved to the HTTPS equivalent, code 301). ❖

INTERESTING INTERNET FINDS

BY **Steve Costello**

scostello AT sefcug.com

How To Disable The Smart Compose Feature In Gmail

https://techviral.net/disable-smart-compose-gmail/

I keep the Smart Compose feature turned off because I distrust the AI figuring out what I want to say. So if you have not turned this feature off in your Gmail, I suggest you do it now. ❖

Can You Get a Virus from a QR Code?
Continued from Page 7

of data: 7089 numeric characters or 4296 alphanumeric characters. You can't write much of a program in that space. But a QR code can easily take you to a malicious site. Humans cannot tell one QR code from another, generally speaking. You have no idea where a QR code is going to take you until you scan it. So it pays to be skeptical of all QR codes, while exercising some common sense.

AskBobRankin.com

There's an example QR code above, which leads to the AskBob home page. You can safely scan that if you want to see how it works. QR codes printed in paper publications, on in-store posters, on coupons from well-known retailers, and similar places are unlikely to be malicious. But never forget the days when shrink-wrapped software packages were infected with malware at the factory by disgruntled workers.

A QR code on a Web page is more easily compromised. If a hacker can crack the site's security, he can replace a legitimate QR code with a malicious one of his own. There have already been reports of malicious QR codes showing up in spam emails. Be a bit more cautious before scanning online QR codes, and especially if they arrive in unsolicited emails.

If you notice a sticker bearing a QR code just randomly slapped up on a wall or a sign post, think twice before scanning it. On the other hand, this method of distributing malicious QR codes is so inefficient that it probably isn't used much.

The FBI warns against downloading apps via QR codes, and advises that you download apps from the official app store for your mobile platform, which would be Google Play for Android devices, and the App Store for the iPhone or iPad.

They also advise users to be wary of scams that involve an email about a failed payment with a QR code to complete the payment. If you receive such a message, find the company's customer service phone number on their website and call to verify. Always avoid making payments through a website linked to a QR code.

One thing you can do to minimize risk is preview the destination URL before possibly heading off into some dark corner of the Web. Most smartphones will show you the website address encoded in the QR code, and ask you to confirm before continuing. That's no guarantee that the destination is safe, so you might want to copy the URL and paste it into a URL safety checker.

The Google Safe Browsing page and the Trend Micro Safety Center both allow you to do that.

Malicious QR codes can also be countered by anti-malware apps that translate a QR code into a URL and check against a blacklist of known attack sites. Lookout Mobile Security is one such app that works on both Android and iOS devices.

Malicious QR codes are still rare, but if they work you can be sure they'll become more common. It's better to be on your guard now than after you scan the wrong QR Code. ❖

FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS

Go to **HTTPS://WWW.APCUG2.ORG** for all aspects of computing and operating systems.

TECHBOOMERS.COM

For learning how to use internet-based websites and internet-based applications for free.

- https://TechBoomers.com
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2-bwYlYu1I

SPECIAL OFFERS

Go to the APCUG website https://apcug2.org/discounts-special-offers-for-user-groups/ for discounts and special offers for Members of User Groups. Avast Anti-virus and Acronis True Image, and several book, media and training sites offer discounts including the two mentioned below.

- Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
Informit.com/user_groups/index.aspx
Code for print books: **ITCOMMUNITY**
Code for eBooks: **DIGITALCOMMUNITY**

- See books on digital imaging and photography, gaming, animation, film and video, post-production, audio, music technology, broadcast and theatre from Routledge | Focal Press today! They offer discounts to User Group members. **Focal Press** Taylor & Francis Group

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LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Dear Tech Support,

Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend 5.0 to Husband 1.0, and I noticed a distinct slowdown in overall system performance — particularly in the flower and jewelry applications, which operated flawlessly under Boyfriend 5.0.

In addition, Husband 1.0 uninstalled many other valuable programs, such as Romance 9.5 and Personal Attention 6.5. Then it installed undesirable programs such as NFL 5.0, NBA 3.0, and Golf Clubs 4.1.

Conversation 8.0 no longer runs, and Housecleaning 2.6 crashes the system. I've tried running Nagging 5.3 to fix these problems, but to no avail. What can I do?

Signed, Desperate

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Dear Desperate,

First keep in mind, Boyfriend 5.0 is an Entertainment Package, while Husband 1.0 is an Operating System. Please enter the command: "I Thought You Loved Me.exe" and try to download Tears 6.2 and don't forget to install the Guilt 3.0 update. If that application works as designed, Husband 1.0 should then automatically run the applications Jewelry 2.0 and Flowers 3.5.

But remember, over use of the above application can cause Husband 1.0 to default to Grumpy Silence 2.5, Happy Hour 7.0 or Beer 6.1. Beer 6.1 is a very bad program that will download the Snoring Loudly Beta.

Whatever you do, DO NOT install Mother-in-law 1.0 (it runs a virus in the background that will seize control of all your system resources).

Also, do not attempt to reinstall the Boyfriend 5.0 program. These are unsupported applications and will crash Husband 1.0.

Husband 1.0 is a great program, but it does have limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. You might consider buying additional software to improve memory and performance. We recommend Food 3.0 and Hot Lingerie 7.7.

Good Luck, Tech Support *Submitted by Mark Presky*

NOTICE

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual Membership Dues:

Regular New and Renewal,
    Printed Newsletter $ 40
    Electronic Newsletter   30
Family-Associate   12
Students   18
Contributor   50
Supporter   75
Benefactor   100
Gift Membership   20
A subscription to *User Friendly* is included with membership.
Associate members live in the same household or work at the same address as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website. **Students** must prove full-time status. A member may give a 1-year, 1-time **gift** to a non-member.

Monthly general meetings are via Zoom. In-person or hybrid meetings may take place in the future.
Members also enjoy these special benefits:
    — Monthly Newsletter *User Friendly*. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.
    — Get FREE help by phone from knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly.*
    — Get help by email by using our LACSLIST eMail List. Send your questions to lacslist (at) lacs.groups.io
    — Receive important news and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's e-mail lists.

    — Free APCUG (International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups) **Webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information.** Check *User Friendly* and your email to see what's offered, and when.
    — Occasional **free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.
    — Rewards for recruiting; LACS will extend your membership for three months for each new regular member you recruit.
    — Annual Holiday Party
    — Social Interacting with others who have like interests in computers and technology.
    — Special Interest Groups (SIGs) on various topics may be created by members.

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Date: _____   *LACS*   **New or Renewal Membership Application**

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Please mail your dues and this form to:
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Name of Associate: First   Last
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Revised Dec. 2020, ljc

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GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know. When you click on the link, you will enter a waiting room. Then the host or a co-host will admit you to the meeting.

Please try to arrive at least a few minutes before the meeting start-time so you don't interrupt the meeting and any technical problems can be solved. If you need to take a break during a meeting, do not click on Leave or End. If you do, the meeting will be interrupted for someone to re-admit you from the waiting room. You may turn off your video when you are gone.