

User Friendly

LACS
**A Computer and
Technology
User Group**

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APCUG EVENTS

Watch your email for
APCUG workshops and
other upcoming events.

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG

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



An International
Association of Technology
and Computer User Groups

SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 - 9:00 PM - via Zoom

Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30 - 7:00

➡ **Election Nominations and Introduction of Candidates**

Topic: Free and Open-Source Software
and Alternatives to Free Software

Speaker: John Kennedy

East-Central Ohio Technology User Club

APCUG Speakers Bureau

APCUG Advisor for Regions 3 and 6



As a retired school teacher on a fixed income, "**Free**" John learned about many free, high quality programs that do your everyday computing tasks. Many free programs are cross-platform, having versions for Windows, Macs, and Linux. So, it is easy to share files. John does almost everything on the computer with free and open- source software including Linux. He says, "If you don't come away from this presentation with a number of programs to check out, you must have snoozed or stepped away during the meeting." He will provide a page of links for getting this free software.

Meet Our Presenter

John taught elementary school for 25 years. He learned about and taught the Linux operating system. Since retiring he has taught local senior citizen computer classes and has spoken to many internet conferences and APCUG audiences. John spends many hours helping Windows and Linux users with computer problems. He manages the APCUG Zoom Account, hosting many of the APCUG's Wednesday Workshops and Saturday Safaris. His first computer in the early 1980s was an Atari 400. It was followed by more Ataris, mainline Windows computers, and three PCs using Linux that he built.

Tuesday, September 13, 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 before or on September 11. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net before September 11.

More information about LACS is at www.lacspc.org.



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR



CALLING ALL LACS MEMBERS

LACS needs help in finding interesting presentations for the general meetings. If you are able to share your interests or knowledge with us, or if you know someone who can, please let Stephanie Nordlinger know. A presentation can take one to one and a half hours, or we can have a couple of mini talks at a meeting.

Or, if you would rather write, I would like to have articles from our members to publish in *User Friendly*. They can be from 100 words to several pages in length. If you run across an article you think our members would be interested in, please let me know. Just be sure it isn't copyrighted.

PDF TO DOCX

I have been using a free utility to convert .pdf files to .docx, so I can easily edit them. It has been helpful to me for publishing in User Friendly articles from other user group's newsletters.

Go to <https://pdf2docx.com>. From there, you can upload or drag and drop the file into the converter. It only takes a few seconds to convert, then you can click Download to open the .docx file.

WELCOME TO ALL LACS NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Gavin Faught, LACS Treasurer

New Members (0)

Renewals (5)

Donna Benton
Marcia Jacobs
Monique Kemp
Alfreda Sanders
Maurice Stephenson



NOMINATIONS FOR LACS 2023 BOARD

Stephanie Nordlinger, vice president, was appointed the nomination committee chair. Please inform her if you would like to run for a board position. She reports that these LACS members have agreed to run for the following offices:

- President - Leah Clark
- Vice Pres. - Stephanie Nordlinger
- Secretary - Marcia Jacobs
- Treasurer - Gavin Faught
- Directors - Sylvia Davis, Howard Krivoy, and Mark Presky

All of the above are incumbents. The officers will be elected for a one-year term for 2023, and the directors for a two-year term, 2023 and 2024. Their bios and pictures will be in the October *User Friendly*.

Irv Hershman, Emil Rozek, Annette Tossounian and Paula Van Berkorn will be serving the second year of their terms as directors through 2023.

We need new blood and new ideas, so do not be shy. Offer to run for any office or directorship that interests you. (The President must have served on the board for at least a year before January 2023.) Descriptions of the duties of each position are in the Bylaws, on our website at <https://lacspc.org> under the General tab.

Nominations will be taken at the September meeting. **We ask each candidate, including incumbents, seeking an office to submit their articles (about 100 words) and pictures for *User Friendly* to Leah Clark before September 20** so they can be in the October issue. If there are no contested positions, voting will take place at the October meeting. Otherwise, all members will receive a ballot. Many thanks to the nominees.



A few participants at the August 9 general meeting

GENERAL MEETING REPORT

August 9, 2022

By **Leah Clark**, LACS President/Editor

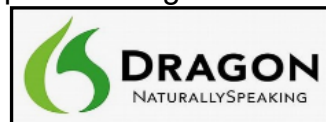
Topic: Members' Mini Presentations,
Questions, Answers, and Opinions

Speakers: LACS Members and Guests

This was a different kind of meeting. LACS members and guests were welcome to share their computer experiences, ask and answer questions, and share their knowledge with other members. And that is what they did!

At the beginning, each attendee introduced themselves, telling a little about their backgrounds and interests. The LACS is a diverse group with a lot of knowledge to share. Then it was pointed out that we need nominations for our 2023 board, and members were asked to consider joining the board.

Irv Hershman gave a presentation on Dragon Naturally Speaking, a speech recognition software. It is relatively expensive, but Irv thinks it is worth it if you are writing a book



or papers. He discussed how he handles various jobs with Dragon, including correctly spelling the unique names of composers and musicians. He has trained Dragon to recognize unusual words. There are many commands he can use to accomplish what he wants to do, but there is a rather steep learning curve because it does so much. Irv recommends Dragon over other voice recognition software he has tried.

Jim McKnight talked about some computer and smartphone problem-solving techniques. **Stephanie Nordlinger** had sent out a handout with things to consider. The first thing to do before asking for help is to turn your computer off and back on. Often the problem will go away. Note if you had added any new software or hardware to your computer before having the problem. There is so much to do when having a problem; you can't just talk about it in generalities. You can often Google to find answers to your problems. The hardest part of Googling is coming up with good keywords. Stephanie had also sent a handout on learning sources. She reminded us that there is a lot of information on YouTube. She had found a manual for an old FAX machine. **E. J. Rozek** mentioned that FAX machines are becoming passe, but they are widely used in the medical field.

Our guest, **Donna Armitage**, shared an education site she likes, [GetSetup.io](https://getsetup.io). They have free classes on just about



any subject. She also likes [SeniorPlanet.org](https://seniorplanet.org) from AARP which offers free exercise and other classes.



Some LACS members asked about having in-person meetings again. Advantages of Zoom are that people can attend meetings from a distance, and some don't drive at night, but personal contact is missed.

Hybrid meetings require having a place, special equipment, and someone to set it up.

We would like to have some in-person meetings in a restaurant as we did with the Lunch SIGs in the past. Several members expressed interest in doing that. Please contact Leah if you are interested in setting up luncheon meetings, maybe quarterly, maybe at a Chinese restaurant.

Charlotte Semple and her daughter bought a T-Mobile hotspot after moving to Oroville. She said it is wonderful. They get email and internet from everywhere, and they can stream what they want on TV without signing up for an email service. You may contact Charlotte if you want to learn more about it.

Stephanie asked about PDF programs. It seems they now want money to buy a subscription, which isn't worth it for only occasional use. She asked if anyone makes their own checks. E. J. never uses checks anymore, and he and Leah now deposit checks through a bank app on their phones.

This was a good meeting; please let us know if you would like more meetings of this type.

"DEFAULT" APPS OR PROGRAMS IN WINDOWS

By **Jim Cerny**

Sarasota Technology User Group
SSTUG Monitor, March 2022

Thestug.org

Perhaps by now, most of us know what "default" means when talking about computers or technology. But in case you forgot, "default" means, "This is what you get until you change it to something else." Computer technology is full of defaults (you may have also heard the term "default settings").

The best way to understand this concept is to

use an example. Suppose you write a document using Microsoft Word (or another word processor app). You can start typing words in your document immediately without selecting the FONT or FONT SIZE first. That's because the app has a default font setting (such as "Times New Roman" in the font box and "12" in the font size box).

Yes, you can go to those boxes and pick any other font or font size you want, but the app starts with something in the box already. That's the default. Other examples in everyday life are thermometers using Fahrenheit, but you can change it to Centigrade, or your speedometer from miles-per-hour to kilometers-per-hour. If you don't like the default setting, change it to something else. Now, let's go one step further and discuss using that essential Windows app called "File Explorer." With file explorer, you can find any file on your computer. And when you see the file you want, you can OPEN that file by double-clicking on the file name.

There are many different types of files – there are photo files, document files, spreadsheet files, and many more. So, when you double-click on a file name in Microsoft File Explorer, Windows uses the DEFAULT app to open that file. Let's take a photo file as an example. In File Explorer, if I double click on a photo file (a file type of ".jpg"), it will open the photo in the Windows Photo Viewer app, and I can see the image. But if I want to open that photo in a different app, say the Windows Paint app, I have to open that app first and use the app to open the photo file.

It turns out that your Windows computer already has selected specific apps to use as the default apps for many file types. And it's no surprise that your default apps are Windows or Microsoft apps.

Here is one more example. If you click on a web page link, your computer will open and use the default web browser to go to that web

page, probably Microsoft Edge. But you can change your default web browser to Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox, or any other browser you want. To do this, click on the Windows start button in the far bottom left corner of your desktop, type in “Default apps” in the search results, select “Default apps,” and then click on the Web browser to see a list of the web browser apps you have and click on the one you want as your new default browser. This is how to change ANY default app on your computer to a different one. You can also get to the “default apps” area through your computer “settings” or “control panel.”

In addition, you can change the default app used for different file types. It is not difficult to do this. To learn how to use Google search on the internet, enter “How do I change my default app for .jpg file types” or anything else. The benefit of knowing about default apps is that you will understand why a specific app is used when you click on something to open it. This also explains the question you sometimes get “Select the app you want to use to open this file,” which could mean you may not have an app that can open it. The best way to make sure you use the specific app to open a file is to open the app first and use the app to select the file. The default is not the default of your computer! ❖

THOUGHTS FROM A CLICKER

By **Tiny Ruisch**, Vice President
Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA
CCCC Computer News www.clickers.org
office (at) clickers.org

Last week, at one of my Zoom meetings, someone asked me if I had ever used IrfanView, an image viewer and editor. About ten years ago, I replied, it was one of my go-to programs. This chance remark gets me thinking about some of my computing experiences over the years. Technology has sure changed a lot.

One of my first computer memories was when I was still in high school, and UNIVAC was in the news. No one had any idea what the thing was good for. The census used one to somehow make counting the population easier. It was a different world back then, and nobody much cared about a machine bigger than the family car that needed a special air-conditioned room.

One thing that interested me was the Texas Instruments pocket calculator. My daddy was a feed salesman, and the company he worked for provided him with one of these expensive machines. I remember him getting it out to show us how he could add 2 and 2 without making a mistake.

When I joined the Navy, I had my first experience with using a computer. I got to run the keypunch machine. If I made a mistake, a ship could easily get 10,000 pounds of butter instead of 1,000. Back then, the Navy paid us in cash. In later years, our paychecks were IBM computer punch cards. Now, most employers don't even issue checks. It's all done electronically.

In the late 1970s, computers started to catch on. IBM was the company that created the home market. Their 8086/8088 weighed about 30 pounds and had a whole megabyte of random-access memory. It blazed along at a speedy 4.77 MHz. Other companies that built computers soon started advertising themselves as IBM compatible. If you worked for IBM, you were required to wear a tie.

This is also the era when many of us hobbyists started building our first computers. Zenith Heath Kits were all the rage. They didn't work any better, but we were smarter because we built our own. The operating system of choice in those days was PC-DOS. There were many other ones, but the home market was mainly CP/M or one of the DOS systems from Apple, Atari, or

(Continued on Page 16)

THE 5 BIGGEST ANDROID MYTHS

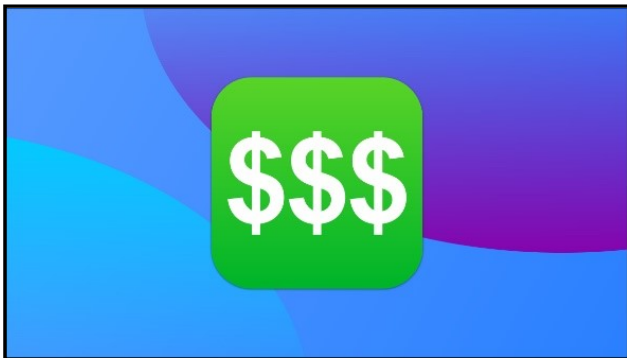
By Joe Fedewa
How-To Geek



The Android operating system has been around for a long time, and it's used by millions and millions of people. Naturally, quite a few myths have cropped up over the years. Are any of these common myths actually true?

What makes a myth a myth? A myth is typically a story or belief that has been around for a long time. It gets repeated over and over until people assume it's true. Many myths have followed Android's explosion in popularity. Let's debunk some of them.

Android Phones Are Cheap



Joe Fedewa / How-To Geek

One of the most common myths about Android is that it's cheap. This is often said as an insult to Android users, especially from those who use iPhones. It's not just about price; it is also a shot at the quality of the devices.

The truth is some Android phones really are cheap, but many of them are not. Android is a gigantic ecosystem of devices from many different companies. That means there's an Android device at just about every price point and quality level.

You can't make a blanket statement like "Android phones are cheap." If you compare an iPhone and an Android device with com-

parable features, the pricing is very similar. *Some* Android phones are cheap; some are very premium and expensive. There's a wide range of options..

Android Is Full of Viruses

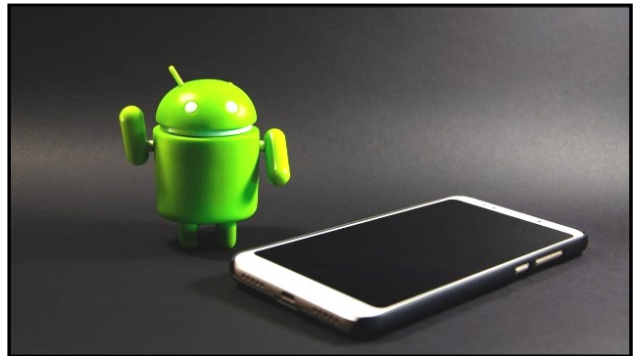


Another super common myth is that Android devices are plagued with viruses and malware. In reality, Android is very similar to Windows in this situation.

There are more viruses and malware for Windows compared to macOS because of how many people use it. In the same way, more viruses and malware are targeted at Android because of how popular it is.

However, just like with Windows, it's really not a big concern if you use Android in a smart way. Installing apps from only the Google Play Store and heeding the browser warnings when you run across an unsafe website will protect you. You don't have to use antivirus software on Android, though you can if you want.

You Need to Close Apps



Arthur_Shevtsov/Shutterstock.com

When Android was a budding new operating system, there was a category of apps that

became very popular — task killers. These apps would close all the apps that were running in the background. People thought it improved performance and battery life. That myth still persists today.

The truth is Android is specifically designed to handle apps in the background. Android automatically manages background tasks and closes things when more resources are needed. You simply do not need to manage this yourself.

In fact, constantly closing apps can have a negative effect on your phone. Instead of the app sitting in the background waiting for you, it has to completely start up again. That requires more resources than resuming from a paused state.

Android Is More Complicated Than iOS



Mr.Mikla/Shutterstock.com

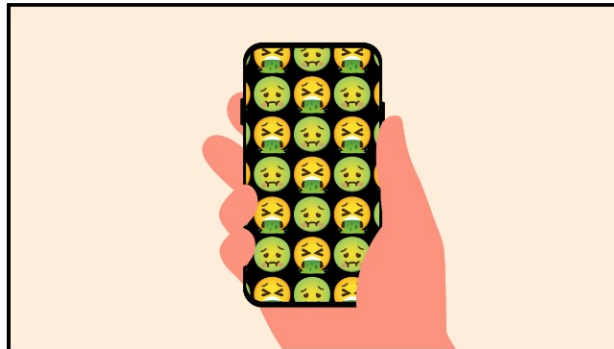
There is a general sense among most people that iPhones are easy to use and Android devices are for more tech-savvy people. It's considered a more complex operating system. I don't think that's true anymore.

iOS on the iPhone certainly started as a very simple operating system, but those days are long gone. iOS has gained many of the features that used to be found only in Android. That has caused iOS to become much more complex than it used to be.

As mentioned in other myths, it's also not fair to compare the entirety of Android to a single device, the iPhone. Samsung Galaxy phones may be more complicated than

iPhones, but I wouldn't say Google Pixel devices are. All smartphones can do a lot.

Android Is Ugly



GarikProst/Shutterstock.com

Let's end with a bit of a subjective myth. People generally consider iPhones to be very aesthetically pleasing, both in the software and hardware. Android is looked down upon as being ugly. Just like the myth above, I don't think that's true anymore.

I certainly agree that iPhones are well designed physically, but iOS has remained largely the same since it launched in 2007. Just look at how little the emoji have changed over the years. Meanwhile, many [Android skins](#) have adapted to current design trends.

In reality, I think this myth comes down to personalization choices. It's easy to make Android look "ugly" with all the personalization options at your fingertips. You can make the system font Comic Sans! Android looks how you want it to look, whereas iOS mostly looks how Apple wants it to look.

A lot of the Android myths that are still around today come from when both the Android and the iPhone were very new. Things have changed a lot since those early days; myths have a tendency to stick around.

Joe Fedewa is a Staff Writer at How-To Geek. He has been covering consumer technology for over a decade and had worked as a News Editor at XDA Developers. Joe loves all things technology. He has written many articles, tutorials, and reviews. ❖

LACS NOTICES

TO PAY YOUR DUES VIA PAYPAL

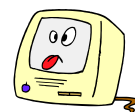
Go to this link:

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

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.

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. They are:

PC@LACS.Groups.IO and
LACSLIST@LACS.Groups.IO.

- **PC** is for official LACS business including notices of and links to our general meetings and other activities.
- **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@AOL.com to request to join, or to ask questions.

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

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

Date: Monday, September 5, 2022 via Zoom

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Please log in early so we can start on time.

LACS GENERAL MEETING

Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 via Zoom

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Please log in early so we can start on time.

September 05: Labor Day

September 11: Patriot Day

Grandparents' Day

September 22: First Day of Fall

September 26: Rosh Hashanah



VISIT OTHER COMPUTER USER GROUPS

Check out the URL below for information for visiting other user groups' Zoom and hybrid meetings. See 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

September 13: Free and Open-Source Software and Alternatives to Free Software by John Kennedy

October 11: Digital Editing Fundamentals Plus by John Krout

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 or 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 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.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF, InDesign, Photoshop, etc. - 10	Hardware - 7	Photoshop - 10
Android Smartphones - 8	Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7	Quicken - 8, 12
Apple devices - 11	Mozilla Firefox - 7	Thunderbird - 7
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8	MS Excel - 8, 11, 12	Utilities - 7, 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3	MS Word - 1, 3, 8, 12	Visual Basic - 5
Genealogy - 8	MS Outlook - 8, 1, 10	Websites - 5
Groups.IO - 8	MS PowerPoint - 8, 11	Windows - 7, 8
	MS Publisher - 2	WordPerfect - 8
		Zoom - 2, 9

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	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 Berkorn, 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
Immediate Past President	Stanley Johnson	
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.

RUNNING THE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

by **Dick Evans**

Charlotte County Computer Group, FL

www.cccgc.info

We talk about using the three key maintenance programs at least once a week. You do not have to purchase them; just use the free versions. Simply stated, here is what I recommend you do once a week.

- Run **Patch My PC** to update your maintenance programs
- Run **Superantispyware**
- Run **Malwarebytes**
- Run **Wise Disk Cleaner**

Patch My PC

<https://patchmypc.com>



If any programs suggest an update during the week or want you to purchase them, ignore the request. When you run PMP, the updates will occur; you should do that before you run them individually.

In addition to the maintenance programs, each of us has some non-Windows programs that need to be updated when new releases become available. Patch my PC has a large collection of those programs. It scans your PC locating all of the non-Microsoft programs, and it checks to see if they need updating. Then with one click, you can sit back and let it locate and update all of those programs.

The list of programs is quite extensive (over 300). It might contain some programs that you would like to add to your collection. You can scroll through and check the ones you want. In addition to updating the out-of-date programs already installed, it will install these as well. All of the installs are done in silent mode; you will not have to answer any questions or

have any additional software installed for you without your knowledge. This may take a while depending on how many updates there are and your internet speed.

When completed, the bottom right will show No Software Selected, and a completed message appears above it.

You can start it and then walk away. It needs no intervention on your part to complete the task. To close out, click the X.

SUPERAntiSpyware

<https://superantispyware.com>



This program does a good job removing spyware and other forms of malware. When it installs, DO NOT accept the trial version.

Locate the desktop shortcut and click to run Superantispyware. Click to check for updates to make sure you have the latest. I ignore the ORDER NOW suggestions, and then click the OK button. I leave all the checkmarks as they are and click on *Quick Scan*.

If unwanted programs show up right away, remove them. Then the scan will continue checking all the files on your computer for potential problems. This may take a while, depending on how many files are on your computer. Click *Continue*, then *Continue* again to remove any threats.

If a screen displays saying, “*SUPERAntiSpyware cannot clean tracking cookies while your internet browser is running*”, click Yes to close the browser. After seeing a screen saying *Threat Removal Complete!* Click *Continue*, then close the program.

Malwarebytes

<https://malwarebytes.com>



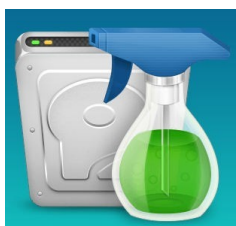
This program does a good job removing malicious software and PUPs (potentially unwanted programs).

Locate the desktop shortcut and click to run Malwarebytes. Then click *Scan*. This will run for a while, checking updates first, then going through all the files on the system. When it finishes, click *Done*, then exit the program.

Wise Disk Cleaner

<https://wisecleaner.com>

In addition to the above three programs, the club recommends **Wise** as an alternative to CCleaner. It is easy to use and quick to run.



Wise Disk Cleaner is a quick download and install. You can even get it as a portable file to use from a flash drive. I installed it on my computer with an icon on the desktop.

Open the program to its home page.

Click any of the right-facing arrows to see details of what will be removed. A black square indicates there are items that are available to clean that are not checked. I left mine with the default settings and strongly suggest you do the same. The checkmark means everything in that category will be cleaned.

If you don't want an item removed, click to uncheck it. If you want to add an item to the to be removed list, check it. Click the Scan button in the upper right and the search for files to be removed begins. A progress bar shows how far along the process is and what section is being worked on.

When the analysis finishes, a summary appears. Actual removal takes place when the *Clean* button is clicked.

There are additional items on the menu bar.

- **Advanced Cleaner** will dig down deeper to locate more files that may be removed.
- **Slimming System** allows the Windows installation files to be removed saving

even more hard disk space. I have checked the first two items and pressing the Remove button will clean those files.

- **Disk Defrag** will defragment the drives on the system. Windows 10 defrags in the background so you may not feel a need to do this. If you do, I suggest you let it run as the last job of the day.

DO NOT defrag a solid state drive.

If you click to add a checkmark to *Shut Down after disk defrag*, you can walk away. When the defrag is completed the system will be shut down.

Note: you can have Wise Disk Cleaner run automatically daily or weekly, etc.

Editor's note: The original article as published in the CCCG newsletter contained many detailed screen shots. To see them go to www.cccgc.info and click on the title in the right hand column. ❖

TECH SUPPORT RAGE: IS IT INTENTIONAL?

By **Bob Rankin**

AskBobRankin.com



You've probably suffered the dreaded agony of calling for "Tech Support" if you own any modern appliance or electronic gadget. Even the most even-tempered human quickly experiences alarming symptoms: sharply increased blood pressure, trembling fingers, reddening face, rising voice, and colorful language. Is it possible that tech support services are, in fact, *designed* to elicit such a response from you?

Read on for the full story...

Is Tech Support Designed to Enrage You?

This condition even has a name among mental health professionals: “tech support rage.” And in many cases, it's also quite deliberately induced by the companies you call for tech support.

There's an old proverb: “Never attribute to malice what is adequately explained by stupidity.” But the companies that design devilish tech support systems are not stupid; they know exactly what they're doing and its effects on customers.

They analyze every call to see what buttons you press, how long you wait on hold, and what you say to the interactive voice response system, including the naughty words. They seek, quite successfully, to strike an optimal balance between losing customers and avoiding the unprofitable expense of talking to them.



Then, if you persist and finally get a live human being on the line, “the system” is designed to make your interaction with them as painful and unhelpful as possible. The International Customer Management Institute (ICMI) surveyed its members and all customer service managers. It found that 92% of them think their agents could be more effective, and 74% said their compa-

nies' procedures prevented agents from being more effective.

That bears repeating: three out of four customer service managers say their companies' carefully designed and precisely documented procedures prevent you from getting satisfaction. They are well aware of it, and no one is doing anything to change those policies.

Why is Tech Support So Frustrating?

The reason is “money,” of course. Most tech support is provided free of charge, so companies want to provide as little of it as possible. Rather than make products that work as advertised, are easy to figure out, and don't break, they do all they can to make customers go away with their problems.

This is not just my own little conspiracy theory. Justin Robbins, who was once a tech support agent himself and now oversees research and editorial at ICMI, told the New York Times in an interview: “Don't think companies haven't studied how far they can take things in providing the minimal level of service. Some organizations have even monetized it by intentionally engineering it, so you have to wait an hour at least to speak to someone in support, and while you are on hold, you hear messages like, ‘If you'd like premium support, call this number, and for a fee, we will get to you immediately.’”

In my experience, this treatment isn't limited to the world of computers and tech gadgets. I called Sears, wanting to schedule a service appointment for our broken dishwasher. Even though we have a pre-paid service contract, the rep started asking ridiculous questions in an attempt to “help me” diagnose and fix the problem myself. He then put me on hold, allegedly to find the service manual, and when he returned, he offered to email me some helpful do-it-yourself instructions.

No thanks, I will not stick my head in there and fiddle with the whatchamacallits. Just send a technician, please! I eventually got so frustrated that I hung up on the guy. Which is probably

just what they wanted me to do. I called back and got a different rep. And oddly, he was amazingly friendly and helpful. My service visit was scheduled right away. But the cynic in me thinks this is all part of a plan to minimize the expense of sending techs on service calls.

This strategy works best when customers cannot switch to another company. Unsurprisingly, the ICMI survey found that managers in monopolistic markets, such as cable TV or public utilities, reported “agents could be more effective” and “procedures prevent agents from being more effective” at much higher rates than managers in competitive markets. Startups are also more eager to please than incumbents, as anyone who has dealt with a big company and a newcomer can confirm.

The First Line of Defense

Paid services don't want you to cancel your account, and they often have “retention agents” who will argue with you rather than let you cancel your subscription. Some even use software bots to put roadblocks between you and the Cancel Button. But services like [AccountKiller](#) provide the necessary directions for deleting accounts on many social networks and websites.

If you persist and finally get a live human being on the line, don't expect him or her to solve your problem. The first person you speak with probably knows less about the product and its vagaries than you do. The ICMI survey also found that 73% of managers report tech support calls are getting “more complicated,” as customers are increasingly sophisticated and solve simpler issues on their own (or with the help of online forums and sites like mine.)

The “procedures” that companies inculcate into customer service agents emphasize minimizing phone time with each customer, not solving problems. So, when your call ap-

proaches the magic two-minute mark, you are going to be put on “terminal hold” while the agent moves on to other calls, or you are transferred to “escalated” support to wait forever for someone who actually knows the product.

I recently spent over an hour on the phone with an Optimum tech support person, trying to diagnose a problem with my cable modem. We never got beyond “power it off, and then back on again.” I repeatedly asked the rep if they could confirm that my modem had an assigned IP address. That seemed to flummox them, and we kept going back to the most basic troubleshooting steps. When it became clear to me that the tech rep had no technical savvy and was just reading from scripts, I hung up.

Who wouldn't totally lose his temper after an hour of such treatment? It's deliberate, it's cunningly contrived, and it's pervasive throughout the customer support industry. It's not just you.

There are exceptions to this dastardly convention. Amazon's customer service reps get high marks for actually solving problems and doing it swiftly and efficiently. They are empowered to do things for customers like immediately sending out a replacement product or issuing a refund.

I've also had consistently good experiences over the years with Verizon tech support for both billing and technical issues. When a rep can't help, they pass you on to a “Level 2” or “Level 3” support person who specializes in your specific problem. But in most cases, when you call tech support for a large company, you will be driven to the verge of murder. So be prepared.

How to Make Friends and Influence Tech Support People

Do whatever it takes to avoid losing your temper with an agent; that won't get your

problem solved; it will just get you put on terminal hold faster. Take a deep breath. Meditate. Take a chill pill (or something stronger if you have a prescription). Moreover, you may actually get an agent to work for you if you try honey instead of vinegar.

Remember the agent's name and use it often; this establishes a personal relationship, and most agents are starved for personal recognition. Try (and I know it's hard) to find some humor in the situation. If you can make an agent laugh, which they probably haven't done since accepting the tech-support job, you'll get the best service that canned scripts and limited authority can provide. It's better than terminal hold.

Here's an idea for avoiding the hell of navigating those interactive voice response (IVR) systems: use social media to contact tech support. Posting your plea for help on a company's Twitter feed or Facebook account may well get attention much faster than a phone call, and at least you're not waiting on hold until attention is paid.

Another tactic is to choose the voice-menu option for "sales" or "place an order" instead of "technical support." Those callers are answered faster because they mean money. They're usually answered by people in your country, too, while tech support calls are answered by foreigners in who-knows-where.

You can also consult sites such as [DialAHuman](#) and [GetHuman](#), which are repositories for the collective knowledge of many customers. They include tips for navigating specific companies' IVRs (Internet Voice Response) as painlessly as possible, and they direct phone numbers of key customer service staffers at many companies.

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.

His work has appeared in *Computer World*, *NY Newsday*, and other publications. Bob is also the operator of [Flowers Fast!](#), the popular online florist service, and author of several computer books. ❖

Thoughts from a Clicker

(Continued from page 5)

Commodore. In the early 1980s, a fellow you may have heard of buying an operating system called 86-DOS, which was also known as Q-DOS (for Quick and Dirty DOS). Bill Gates later renamed it MS-DOS for the company that he founded. I'm pretty sure that Microsoft is still in business today.

Home computing started to take off in the '80s when Radio Shack introduced the Trash 80 (oops, I meant TRS 80). Apple's home computer was something called the TI-99. I remember the first computer I bought. It was a Commodore VIC20. I loved that computer with its 5 KB of RAM and the data cassette storage, even though it often took 3-4 minutes to load a program. Incidentally, the VIC20 was the first home computer that sold a million units. In later years the Commodore 64 was even better.

The first innovative computer program to be sold was the spreadsheet VisiCalc. Like so many other successful things, clones like Lotus 1-2-3, SuperCalc, and Microsoft Excel were soon on the market. Did you know that Microsoft's Excel was first introduced for the Apple Macintosh? It was only later that it was ported to Windows. WordStar was the first commercially profitable word processor.

The real software revolution was the games. I don't think you could walk 50 feet without seeing somebody playing Space Invaders, PAC Man, or one of the many variations of Pong. I'll confess that my favorite games were made by Infocom. They specialized in

“interactive fiction” games. I still remember their advertising slogan, “We put our graphics where the sun don't shine.” Graphics adapters later put this type of adventure game out of business. Their first game was Zork which debuted in 1980.

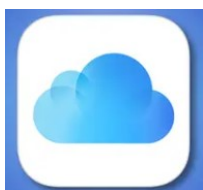
In the old days, the only decision to be made when you bought a monitor was whether to have green or amber output. The only sound you could hear was the tinny beep of the operating speaker. The only mouse in the computer room lived in the wall. Printers were all dot matrix and printed about 30 characters a minute.

Of course, one of the biggest changes in computing has been the internet and the use of e-mail. I've heard that email was invented by a Nigerian that had a lot of extra money to spend. The browser choices were Mosaic or Netscape. We've come a long way from logging in to the Bulletin Board.

I'm going to shut up for this month. Please remember that I've just written about some of my computing memories, so the facts may not be 100 percent correct. I'm just amazed at how far technology has advanced. ❖

YOUR PHONE PLAN MIGHT ADD ICLOUD, APPLE MUSIC, AND MORE

From **How-To Geek**
By **Corbin Davenport**
Software Developer and
News Editor
[@CORBINDAVINPORT](https://twitter.com/CORBINDAVINPORT)



It's common for [cell phone plans](#) to bundle streaming services or cloud storage, usually at a reduced cost or free. Apple has now opened the door for iCloud storage, Apple Music, Apple TV+, and other services to be bundled with mobile carrier plans.



EE, a mobile network in the United Kingdom, announced that it is the first mobile network to bundle [Apple One](#) with a mobile plan. The company's 'Full Works for iPhone' package will include the bonus starting on August 31, as well as a 'Roam Abroad Pass' for international roaming in Canada, the European Union, United States, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand. EE has an alternative plan for Android devices with different benefits.

[What Is Apple One, and How Much Does the Subscription Cost? \(howtogeek.com\)](#)

Apple One is Apple's all-in-one subscription service, which includes nearly all of Apple's paid services. The base Individual and Family plans have Apple Music, Apple TV+, Apple Arcade, and 50 GB of iCloud storage, while the Premier plan adds Apple News+ and Fitness+. EE is only offering the individual plan with its mobile package, but considering Apple One costs £14.95 per month in the UK, including that at no extra cost is still a decent deal. ❖

YOU MAY NEED TO REPLACE YOUR OLD KINDLE SOON

From **Review Geek**
By **Andrew Heinzman**
News Editor
[@ANDREW ANDREW](https://www.reviewgeek.com/author/andrew-andrew/)



If you're still holding on to an old Kindle, you may want to replace it soon. Amazon is now emailing customers to warn that select Kindles, specifically five very old models, will lose access to the Amazon eBook store on August 17th of 2022.

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FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS

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TECHBOOMERS.COM

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

- <https://TechBoomers.com>
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LAUGHING OUT LOUD

- It turns out that being a "senior" is mostly just googling how to do stuff.
- My mind is like an internet browser. At least 19 open tabs, 3 of them are frozen, and I have no clue where the music is coming from.
- Hard to believe I once had a phone attached to a wall, and when it rang, I picked it up without knowing who was calling.
- She says I keep pushing her buttons. If that were true, I would have found "Mute" by now.
- As I've gotten older, people think I've become lazy. The truth is I'm just being more energy efficient.

Submitted by Marcia Jacobs



From How-To Geek

NOTICE

The columns, reviews and other expressions of opinion in *User Friendly* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Los Angeles Computer Society. LACS became a California non-profit corporation on July 17, 1991. Its predecessor was the UCLA PC Users Group.

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 or email (See your roster) 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 lacslis (at) lacs.groups.io

— **Receive important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's

— **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.

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— **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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Please mail your dues and this form to:

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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.