

Trails End Computer Club

Bulletin for the month of SEPTEMBER 2013

**MEETINGS
WILL
CONTINUE
IN THE
FALL**

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS:

If you would like to meet in a small group to discuss special computer related subjects or form a Special Interest Group lets discuss it.

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Free Systems Maintenance Utilities from WiseCleaner by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

<http://wisecleaner.com/download.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisecare365.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisepc1staid.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/awards.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wiseregistrycleanerfree.html>

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/best-free-registry-cleaner.htm>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisediskcleanerfree.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisedatarecoveryfree.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisememoryoptimizerfree.html>

<http://wisecleaner.com/wisegameboosterfree.html>
<http://wisecleaner.com/wisejetsearchfree.html>
<http://wisecleaner.com/wiseautoshutdownfree.html>

As we use our computers, they inevitably become cluttered with useless and obsolete data, program fragments, countless outdated log and cache files, unnecessary programs that load at startup which degrade performance, and a host of other issues that deprive us of the satisfaction that we paid for.

A well established software company that has been around for years, WiseCleaner (wisecleaner.com) has been providing both free and paid commercial "Pro" utilities intended to enhance our PC performance and speed. In recent months, WiseCleaner has added new titles, mostly free, to its stable of utilities, as well as continued its policy to release new and improved versions of its existing products. According to the WiseCleaner website, over 15,000,000 copies of its products have been downloaded.

One of the first utilities published by WiseCleaner was its Wise Registry Cleaner, which is free, and has been recognized by many in the industry as the best registry cleaner available. Widely used and reviewed, Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com (techsupportalert.com/best-free-registry-cleaner.htm) gave Wise Registry Cleaner its "Gizmo's Freeware award as the best product in its class!". One of the reviews posted on the Wise Cleaner website is summarized as, "PCWorld's editor thinks Wise Registry Cleaner is too good to be free."

Since the registry is an internal system database that tracks and controls almost all of the hardware and software on the computer, it is extremely critical that it functions properly or the PC may be relegated to be used as a boat anchor; a damaged registry could stop a computer cold, in extreme cases preventing anything from ever loading. It is this risk of damage to the registry that has made registry cleaners among the most widely used cleaning utilities, as well as among the most controversial of utilities. Gizmo warns, "Thus it is evident, a registry cleaner is - if at all - a tool reserved for the experienced user. The inexperienced may be assured that since the introduction of Windows XP, registry cleaning is no longer a crucial issue for the stability, security and performance of your system. Don't mess around with it!" For those who like to tweak their PCs, it is absolutely imperative that the registry be frequently backed up, as well as any changes to the registry, such that an improper or erroneous cleaning can be quickly and easily undone. Wise Registry Cleaner offers a full registry backup, as well as a backup of any items changed, as a program feature. According to the website, "In essence, this product is safer than other registry tools." Wise Registry Cleaner can also defragment the registry, a process that many users claim will speed the boot process, and marginally improve performance. Wise Registry Cleaner will run on Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7 and 8 (both 32-bit and 64-bit); for those who are involved with working on others' computers, a portable version that can be run from a flash drive is also available. Wise Disk Cleaner is a very popular free drive cleaner that directly competes with industry leaders such as CCleaner. This utility has been tested and reviewed by the leading PC publications, and given high marks, including CNET's highest 5 star

rating, and recommendations from ZDNet, CHIP, Microsoft TechNet Magazine and other publications and websites. One fact acknowledged in several of the published reviews is Wise Disk Cleaner's scanning speed, which some claim is twice as fast as the industry leader, CCleaner.

A disk cleaner is necessary because with normal use, a hard drive (or other storage device) becomes cluttered with data and files that are no longer needed, but may take up substantial space on the drive. The types of files selectively cleaned by Wide Disk Cleaner include temporary files, log files, internet history and cache files (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox and Safari browsers), cookies, invalid shortcuts, traces, and other obsolete files. In order to free up even more hard drive space, this utility optionally offers what it calls a "slim down" feature that removes unused and potentially unwanted Windows files including wallpaper, IME files, help files, download installation files, as well as images, and videos that are included in Windows primarily as samples or for demonstration purposes, but serve no other meaningful function. A fully functional disk defrag function rearranges files on the hard drive in order to improve read and write speed, and may possibly also reduce wear on the hard drive.

While a registry cleaner may have been among the first and most widely used software from WiseCleaner, and the disk cleaner is also very popular, these products are far from the only products. One of Wise Cleaner's newer utilities is Wise Care 365, and multifunction PC cleaning and speed up tool available both as a fully functional free version, and as a paid "Pro" version, currently priced at \$29.95 for an annual subscription, licensed for three PCs; for another \$27.05 (\$57 total), the Pro version can be upgraded to a lifetime license. The Pro version adds custom skins and avatars, automatic background updates, and free 24x7 technical support. Wise Care 365 combines two of its most popular utilities, Wise Disk Cleaner and Wise Registry Cleaner, with other features and functions. Some of the integrated utilities include a system tune-up and optimizer (internet and network speedup, disk defragmentation, registry defragmentation, and a startup manager); and a "Privacy Protector" (privacy eraser that deletes histories of viewed media and web pages, a drive eraser, file shredder to securely delete files, and a password generator that creates secure passwords). For those who like speed and simplicity, Wise Care 365 offers a one-click automatic cleanup and tune-up. According to published reports, this utility is possibly the fastest scanner available, possibly twice as fast as the popular CCleaner, and faster than the widely used IObit Advanced System Care, which itself is recognized as a speed demon. As with almost all of the other WiseCleaner utilities, Wise Care 365 runs on all versions and builds of Windows from XP to Windows 8, including both 32-bit and 64-bit versions. A portable version is available that can be run from a flash drive.

Many of us have some irritating problems on our PCs, including non-functional desktop icons, hyperlinks that will not open properly, Microsoft utilities that will not open (such as the registry editor and task manager), slow internet speeds (caused by incorrect settings), slow program execution, inadequate memory errors, slow booting, and other common problems. WiseCleaner offers Wise PC 1stAid as a free utility that can assist the user in automatically repairing many of the common system

and performance problems; updates and technical support (email) are free. Wise PC 1stAid offers the user an easy to use non-technical method of identifying and repairing problems by simply matching a provided screenshot image, description, or error statement to identify and then intelligently resolve the problem.

WiseCleaner offers several other free utilities, all of which also run on all versions of Windows from XP to 8, including 32-bit and 64-bit systems, and often offer a portable version as well. Some of these utilities include Wise Data Recovery which may be able to recover deleted files, photos, and other content; Wise Program Uninstaller which thoroughly and safely removes programs being uninstalled; Wise Folder Hider which can hide selected files and folders, protecting them from prying eyes; Wise Memory Optimizer, which manages PC memory, removing any files from memory that are unnecessary or no longer needed, improving performance and speed; Wise Game Booster, which stops unnecessary tasks and programs from running while gaming, improving gaming performance; Wise JetSearch, which is a very fast search tool to locate files and folders on the computer; and Wise Auto Shutdown, which automates and manages the logoff, sleep, and shutdown processes.

Historically, WiseCleaner introduces new utilities on a periodic basis, many of which are greeted by rave reviews in the computing mass media. With the broad assortment of free, highly rated utilities published by WiseCleaner, PC users will surely find something helpful that may improve their computing satisfaction.

Are we all turning into magnetic ink?

By Greg Skalka, President, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood UG), CA April 2013
issue DriveLight

www.uchug.org

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I've miles

And miles

Of files

Pretty files of your forefather's fruit and now to suit our great computer,

You're magnetic ink.

(From "In the Beginning" by Graeme Edge, from the album "On The Threshold of a Dream" by The Moody Blues, 1969)

Are we all turning into magnetic ink? That poem was written over 40 years ago, before the Internet, server farms, Amazon.com, big data, social media and digital image recognition, yet it predicts a road we are traveling down now. In the liner notes, it is the "Establishment" that speaks these words, with the goal of turning man into a quantifiable set of data. Are we all on our way to being defined by our data?

Companies compile more and more data about our habits and preferences, reducing our privacy and our ability to remain anonymous. From Google's targeted advertisements to Amazon's purchase suggestions, we are being reduced to a database of our likes and dislikes, ready for commercial exploitation. Our web searches are tracked so we can be presented with "more relevant" advertising, but the goal is more effective advertising, meaning more sales for less cost. It may be nice to be presented only with things we really would be interested in, but when algorithms are implemented incorrectly, it can lead to limiting and even inaccurate suggestions. I once bought my daughter a lamp she wanted as a gift from eBay; now I regularly receive suggestions for other lamp purchases, something I care nothing about. The history of one oddball purchase may haunt my account forever.

A bigger problem is privacy in this era of commercial digital surveillance. From all this seemingly innocent and inconsequential data being collected about us, we could become defined by our purchases (like the lamp) or our searches. It has probably gotten to the point that one must be careful about what one searches for on Google, or any other search engine.

While the Internet represents an almost unlimited data resource, asking for the wrong things could get you in trouble, or at least earn you an undesirable label. This goes way beyond the obvious illegal activities like child pornography or online involvement with hate groups. Simply searching for information about embarrassing topics like incontinence or a gambling problem can put those topics into your "profile", so later ads reflect those issues. When you let someone else use your computer, those embarrassing issues may be revealed. And since that data is out of your control, who is to say that someday a record of your searches on cancer won't be sold to life insurance companies that could use it to deny you additional coverage.

Though the commercial world probably collects more data, governmental categorization of all of us is even more troubling. Repressive governments all over the world use data collected on their citizens in bad ways. Searching on the wrong topics in some countries can lead to imprisonment. Here we would hope to have more freedom and privacy, but some day, following another incident like 9/11, could we find a misinterpreted web search leading to a visit by the FBI or inclusion on a no-fly list?

There are also real criminals out there trying to collect data on us. Whether it is data to be sold or used for identity theft, or personal information from social media sites exploited for scams, home burglaries or child abductions, our data is sought after by malicious people intent on taking advantage of us. Once again, this may be data that we have no control over, stored on company servers, perhaps with poor safeguards.

Unfortunately, we are often willing, though possibly unknowing participants in this

conversion of our lives into data. All the information we freely share on social networking sites can be a treasure trove to marketers, prospective employers and anyone interested in taking advantage of us. As time goes on, new ways are developed to monitor each of us, from location tracking through our phones, keyword analysis of our emails and facial recognition and tracking of our movements through security camera images. Even data collected with the best of intentions can fall into the wrong hands, or the intentions of the collectors can simply change. Once lists are started for convicted criminals, sex offenders, the mentally ill and potential terrorists, how hard would it be to make more lists, like of those that complain about the government? After all, we are only data.

Where to Put All That Data

All the data we store, and that others store about us, has to be kept somewhere. Today it is stored not in the “magnetic ink” of magnetized domains on recording tape, but in magnetized regions of spinning metal platters. Mechanical hard drives, though losing out in some applications like tablets and phones to solid state memory, are still the primary means of bulk data storage. Seagate recently shipped its two billionth unit, the first hard drive manufacturer to reach that milestone. That is a hard drive for almost every third human on earth. While that seems amazing, what is really of interest is how they got to 2 billion. They have been making drives since 1980, and took 29 years to produce and ship their first billion units. Their second billion took only four years. That is a tremendous amount of digital storage, especially since that last billion were probably each 100 GB or larger drives.

This exponential increase in cumulative drive capacity is necessary, as our need for storage grows exponentially. In 2007, we were uploading just over 5 hours of video to YouTube each minute. Now it is estimated that 72 hours of video is uploaded per minute to the site. To put this in perspective, if you were in the habit of watching YouTube 12 hours a day, every day, then in the five minutes it will take you to read this column, another month’s worth of new content was put on the site. The break is over; get back to watching!

High-Tech Pants

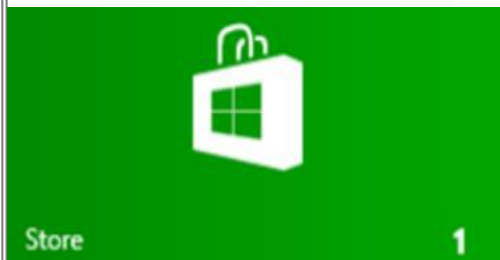
I just bought a new pair of my favorite kind of pants, Costco’s Kirkland blue jeans, and got a surprise. Costco jeans have gone high tech. The product label advertises a new feature I’d not seen before - a cell phone pocket. It seems that Costco has tinkered with the classic five-pocket design and turned the small right front coin pocket into a cell phone pocket. They made that pocket deeper and a bit wider, so it could hold a standard cell phone. A large smartphone would probably be a tight fit. Of course, making that pocket so much deeper makes it useless for holding (or at least extracting) coins.

Most people today think that fifth pocket was designed for coins, but in the days before cell phones and wrist watches, it was meant to hold a pocket watch (the kind on a chain). That was the intended purpose of that pocket on the first Levi’s 501 jeans introduced in 1890. If this cell phone pocket thing catches on, it would thus be

appropriate, as many people have stopped wearing wrist watches, using their cell phones as timepieces instead. If we get to the point where we also use our phones for making retail purchases like they do in Japan, then we won't need to worry about where to put our displaced coins either.

Just A Minute

Intel has produced a graphic and video outlining what happens today in an Internet minute. It shows 639,800 GB of global IP data transferred on the Internet in a minute, with the amount of various activities in that time listed. Some numbers are staggering (6 million Facebook views, 204 million emails sent), some are crazy (320+ new Twitter accounts, 1.3 million video views) and some are scary (20 new victims of identity theft, 135 botnet infections). And just as with hard drive shipments, future growth for the Internet appears to be exponential. Today the number of networked devices equals the global population; by 2015, it will be 2x. If the Internet and the number of devices on it keep growing this way every minute, it won't be long before humanity is minute by comparison. < <http://intel.ly/wjibt1> >



Windows 8 Corner

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The Store App

One of the Apps (applications) distributed with Windows 8 is the Store application as shown below.

There are over 100 free Apps available for download including games, productivity and utility Apps like U-tube Downloader, Windows 8 Tool Box etc.

When you click on the Store app, you will see three tiles titled: Top Paid, Top Free and New Releases. Clicking on any of these tiles will open a full screen with names, (prices if any) and description.

Installing an App from the Microsoft store is easy. If the App is free, just click on the install box and in less than a minute it is installed and available for access. If the App is not free, you can download it for a free trial or pay using your Microsoft account. Uninstalling an App is just as easy. On the Start Screen, right click on the App. At the bottom of the screen, a bar with 6 icons is displayed. Just click on the Uninstall icon and it will be uninstalled and removed from your PC.

If you are curious why the number 1 is displayed on the Store App tile, it is because on one of the Apps I downloaded it has an available update. When I click on the

Store tile, the Update link is displayed on the upper right corner. A click on the link will show the name of the App (in this case Utube Player/Downloader) and at the bottom of the screen will be the option to install the update.

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