

Trails End Computer Club

Bulletin for the week of NOVEMBER 24, 2013

WEEKLY MEETINGS

**EACH
Wednesday
Program or
Lesson 9:30 - 10:30
AM
One on One
Help 10:30-?
In the Library**

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.

Our bulletin is also available on line by visiting tecc.apcug.org and clicking on bulletin.

Our weekly program or lesson is intended to be of interest to all computer users.

Following the program an allotment of time will be available for one on one help to those who want a better understanding of something done during the presentation.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday NOVEMBER 27, 2013 Meeting

9:15 AM Set up your computer

9:30 AM Lesson

10:30 AM One on One help

How to Write, Publish and Promote Your Book for Free Using Technology

By Bohdan O. Szuprowicz, Member, Sarasota PC Users Group, FL

July 2013 issue, PC Monitor www.spcug.org editor (at) spcug.org

Millions of people all over the world want to write and publish a memoir, a novel, or share their grandmother's favorite recipes. They spend months and years chasing agents and publishers only to face endless rejections.

But times have changed. The latest technologies make it possible for anyone who can get on the Internet to become an author, publisher, and promoter of anything he wants to write, whenever he wants to do it, and all without spending any money in doing so.

All you have to do is write your stuff, edit it, and follow instructions of various services to format your text, design a cover, price the book, select a publicity program, and boast about your achievement to book review editors, on Facebook, Twitter or your own E-mailing lists.

Yes, all those functions are being offered to would-be authors at a price by masses of editors, agents, consultants and promoters. They took the trouble of reading the instructions and now they try to cash in on it. You do not need them if you follow the instructions yourself.

The simplest way to start is to go to Amazon's website, which is the largest online seller of books. You are looking for Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) which will provide you with a free instruction booklet how to format your manuscript in Microsoft Word for publication by Amazon as a digital book. So you just write your book in Word and follow simple instructions about spacing, page ends, chapters etc. Once your manuscript is finished you follow the instructions how to publish it on Kindle and that's all there is to it.

You also set the price that you may vary at will as time progresses. Amazon sells your book and you get a royalty of 35% to 70% depending on arrangements.

There are close to 2 million titles on Amazon so it's important that your book has a cover that is distinctive and attractive to readers. You can design your own cover using Picasa collage functions which is also free. It offers hundreds of fonts and colors and you can include any photographs or images you like. The important thing to remember is the fact that on the screen of a tablet or an E-reader these covers are thumbnail-size. As a result you should make sure that the size of title lettering and colors are contrasting and show up clearly in black & white on many E-reader devices.

Once your book is on Kindle you want to let the world know that it has been published and where to find it. If you stick to digital publishing there is no problem of distribution or costs of sending the book by mail. It is delivered via the Internet to the buyer who can read it on about a dozen devices such as E-readers, iPads, PC's, iPhones, and various smart phones.

There are several publicity websites that can be used to announce the publication of your book. Most offer a basic free service as well as paid versions depending on distribution requirements. Once you follow instructions of a press release site you can also include the image of your book cover and send the whole package to book review editors, TV or radio talk show producers, and your personal E-mail lists completely free of charge.

Better still, the URL's of such press releases can be copied and simply pasted into other messages you are sending out. PRLOG is such a service used by the author and examples can found at <http://www.prlog.org>

Twitter and Facebook are the two most popular social media services that you can use freely to promote your book. Although Twitter allows only 140 characters per tweet, you can easily include the URL of your press release and also another link to an image, which may be a Picasa collage of your book cover, prices and reviews, as well as author biography and a photograph of yourself with your pet alligator. You can also use the Twitter search window to send such promo packages to selected recipients like your preferred talk show hosts, and book review editors, many of whom maintain distinct Twitter accounts.

Similarly, Facebook can be used to introduce your memoirs or novel with all the publicity materials to your friends and family. Other social media like LinkedIn, Pinterest and such, can also be used in providing free publicity for your book depending on type of audience you are seeking.

In short, the technology is here to be used and most of it is free. What it means is that anyone can become a published author literally overnight

Apps for Windows 8: What can they do for me?

By Phil Sorrentino, Past President Sarasota PC Users Group, FL

July 2013 issue, PC Monitor www.spcug.org [philsorr \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:philsorr@yahoo.com)

Apps are what make Mobile devices -tablets and phones- so useful. So, what Apps should I have on my mobile device? Well, Microsoft has provided a starter set of Apps, at least for its tablets and laptops, as part of Windows 8. It is a basic set that allows a (new) user to immediately start taking advantage of their mobile device. Most of these Apps are general in nature, but other Apps, more specific to a task, are available (mostly for free) at the Microsoft Apps store. All of the Apps that you have heard of are there for the taking (downloading): Skype, Netflix, Angry Birds, SugarSync, etc.

Here is the collection of Apps that come with Windows 8, in a list prioritized by my particular feeling of usefulness. The first three may be all you will ever use.

1. Desktop - This tile, or App, gets you to Windows, as you knew it. All of the Windows 7 capabilities (with the exception of the old "Start" button) that you are comfortable with are here. If this is all you're looking for, click here and never come back.
2. Internet Explorer - A portal to the Internet, though the User Interface is a little different than you are used to. But, if all you want to do is surf the web, this can get the job done.

3. Store - This App connects you to the Microsoft Store where you can download all the Apps (and some other software programs) that can run on Windows 8.

The next few Apps are certainly useful, but you might find other Apps at the “Store” to satisfy your particular needs.

4. Calendar - A very simple calendar App to help you schedule and keep track of events.
5. Maps - A great way to view your surrounding geography. Input an address or point of interest and see it plotted on a map, with turn-by-turn directions, if needed.
6. SkyDrive - An App that connects you to Microsoft’s portion of the “cloud.” It provides 7GB of free on-line storage. It can be a central location for files you want to access from any of your computers and/or a good place to backup your important files. It can also be used to allow you to share big files with others.
7. Mail - A very basic Mail App that allows you to send and read your mail.
8. Messaging - An App that allows you to chat with your friends. If your friends use a different chat network, you’ll probably want to download an App specifically for that network.
9. Photos - An App that helps organize and view all of your pictures. It collects and organizes pictures from folders and from the on-board camera.
10. Music - An App that lets you collect, organize, and listen to your favorite music. Music will also let you stream music for free. It also lets you get to Microsoft’s new “Xbox Music” service. (“Xbox”, seemingly, has nothing to do with the Xbox gaming system.)
11. Video - This App helps organize, and allows you to view, all your videos. It also provides an entrance to Microsoft’s TV and movie stores.
12. Bing - Microsoft’s search capability. Try to “Bing” something; if it’s out there, Bing can find it. “Bing it on.”
13. People - An App that provides a centralized Address Book for all of your cyber social acquaintances. A centralized place to keep all those email addresses, mailing addresses, social media names, phone numbers, and pictures.
14. Weather - This App provides a color weather map, including a five-day or hour-by-hour forecast for your location or a location of your choosing.
15. Finance - A “Finance News” App that includes stock market activity and financial news that can be customized to your own portfolio.
16. News - A News App that includes Sports, Finance, and Travel. This App combines articles from many websites like The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. It scrolls horizontally and feels much like a newspaper.
17. Sports - A Sports magazine App that includes sports articles from many news sources.
18. Travel - A Travel magazine App. Travel articles from many news sources and pictures of Featured Destinations.
19. Games - An App that connects you to Microsoft’s “Xbox Games on Windows” store.

20. Camera - An App to control the onboard camera. Good for video chats and creating photos for sharing.

The 20 Apps that are included can give a new Windows user a good idea of what Apps are, what they can accomplish, and how to basically control them. Smartphone and tablet users are probably more familiar with the whole App concept. Once you are familiar with the idea of Apps, you will probably want to go to the Microsoft App Store and get (install) Apps that might help you take advantage of your mobile device. When you get to the App store you will find that there are many categories and there are many Apps in each of those categories. Because computer software (read that as Desktop) has been around for almost 30 years, there are established standards like Microsoft Office for Office applications, Adobe Photoshop for photo activities, Acronis for backup, and Adobe for PDF readers. The world of Apps is very new and standards are only now being established. So, it is hard to put together a list of App standards, but from my recent experience let me leave you with a short list of some very good, free Apps to add to your collection. You might want to give some of them a try. To get to these Apps, click on the “Store” App on the start screen and you will be greeted by a display of Available Apps. Websites change, frequently, so things might be a little different by the time you read this, but currently, there are suggestions for “Top Paid”, “Top Free”, and “New Releases”. Click on the category of your choice (Games, Entertainment, Photo, Sports, etc.) and see the available Apps.

- A click on “Spotlight-Top Free” yields a list of the Spotlitged top 100 free Apps. In the list you will find:
- Skype- for video chatting
- YouTube player- for watching YouTube videos
- Netflix- for Movie streaming (if you have an account)
- Yahoo Mail- for Yahoo mail accounts
- CNN- for news and weather
- Google Search –if you prefer Google to Bing
- Microsoft Solitaire Collection- for Solitaire enthusiasts.

In addition to the Apps that are included in the major categories, you can also search for a particular App. This is done using the Search feature that is part of the Charms bar. To get to the Charms bar, click in the lower right corner of the screen. Search is the top icon, the one that looks like the magnifying glass. Click on it, and then type in the name of the App you are looking for. This will result in a search of the “Store” Apps. When, or if, you see the App listed, click on it and it will be available for installation. You might want to try the following Apps:

- Evernote- for note taking
- IMDB- for movie and TV information and
- Dropbox- for an additional storage location in the cloud.

Microsoft’s Store is a lot newer than the Google Playstore (Android) or the Apple iTunes

store (iOS). If you are familiar with an App from either of those stores, you may find that that App is not available at the Microsoft store, yet. Check back in the future, it might be available then. Microsoft's App developers have had less time to create versions that work on the Windows 8 platform, but I'm sure they are working on them.

As you can see, Apps cover a lot of territory and can help you accomplish many things, from simple note taking to video chatting, and video entertainment. Apps turn your computer into all the things you expect from a modern digital programmable computer-your home PC.

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