

September 2016 Newsletter



Have you ever had just “one of those months” where everything goes wrong? Well I just had one! The computers that have been dropped off for repair have had problems that you seldom see, and nasty infections are showing up from hackers trying to get into machines. Did I mention the damage that Microsoft did with their last ditch attempt to upgrade computers without the user’s permission?



So I’ve decided that Now It’s Time!

I have always been a believer in the free version of security software that we put on our computers, but things have gotten much worse in the past couple of months. I was working on a client’s machine and the

machine was infected with numerous “rootkits”. Even though I just transferred the files from the hard drive to a folder on my desktop, it infected my machine and everything was corrupted. I didn’t even open the folder and I never clicked on anything....that’s how bad it was! I lost everything on my machine, but my backup drive had “almost” all my files on it that I needed. It took me almost a week to get my machine back to where it was, but the **backup drive** saved me from a real disaster! I was using the “free” software when this happened.

I’m sure you know where I’m going with this. I **strongly** recommend that you “purchase” a copy of your anti-virus software. I’m using Avast Premier for Business, but they have Avast Internet Security that is perfect for regular home users. Who needs this? **Anyone who shops on-line, does banking on-line or goes to Medicare or Social Security websites on-line definitely needs to upgrade.** Yes, I think that’s most of us. https://www.avast.com/en-us/internet-security?device=c&gclid=Cj0KEQjwo5--BRCS8ceLjv-XppUBEiQAGp15ECVC7jAZmKpblbXRWujHcLA8tZUng0U_sqxPECF9hslaAssv8P8HAQ

If you’re using Malwarebytes free and are **finding a lot of threats when you scan**, then it’s time to upgrade that too. Not only will it keep you safe, but it will also cut down on computer repairs. 😊



Tom Windish had an excellent question for me this month and he said it might be something worth sharing in my

Newsletter. He's right! It's about unsecured networks when you're traveling.

So what is an unsecured network?

- A wireless network is “unsecured” if you can access the internet using the network without entering a **password or network key**. For example, a “hotspot” is a wireless network that is open and available for the public to use. This is something to be very concerned about.... So what should you do?
 1. Start with good security on your device – yes-even Apple.
 2. Turn off your wireless when you're not using it
 3. If supplied a password from the place where you're staying, make sure you disconnect from the network when not using it.
 4. Use Long and Strong Passwords
 5. Use a VPN (virtual private network). **Avast Secureline** is what I subscribe to. This is VPN and is designed to provide secure internet access from unsecured public Wi-Fi spots. It also hides your IP address to protect you! Watch this short video to get an idea of what Avast Secureline is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcVXnjDpJ3k>
 6. Clear your history when you close your browser and delete any active log-ins.



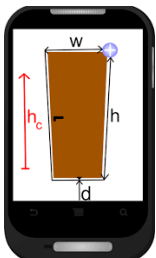
Another thing to remember is that you need to keep your router firmware updated. If you own your router, instead of

renting from Time Warner or Verizon, you're not automatically updated with the latest security. This is why I still rent my equipment. They take care of that for you 😊 Go to this link to learn how to update so hackers can't get into your network.

<http://www.computerhope.com/issues/ch001287.htm>



I have found an app that I love! I'm always trying to hang pictures or shelves and am never sure if it's level. It drives me crazy and in turn drives my husband crazy....since he's the one hanging things up for me. **iHandy Level** is a free download for both iOS and Android that uses your smartphone's accelerometer to help you level objects. The app even mimics a real bubble leveler with a wooden overlay. I've used it and it really works! You can download it from the Apple Store.



Another app to check out is **EasyMeasure**. It estimates the distance or height of an object. It needs some calibration to begin with and then it's ready to use. It's handy for a lot of us who are always looking for a tape measurer! This can also be found in the Apple store. Now we know why they call them "Smartphones"!



This news just came out...Apple customers have been targeted with a massive email scam. The latest phishing email you need to keep an eye out for disguises itself as an iTunes email. The email states that you've been overcharged for a song that's been downloaded and you need to click on the link to **"Cancel (andx) Manage Your Subscription"**. The first dead giveaway is the spelling of "and". Typos are very common in phishing emails, so always look for errors before clicking on a link. Better yet, go directly to the website by typing in the web address, and avoid the link in the message. Most companies have a spam abuse address that you can send an email to and they'll contact you and let you know if the email was really from them or not.



Another problem has cropped up under the guise of being a critical Windows Update for Windows 10. The new attack is called **"Fantom Ransomware"** and can be very successful because it looks very much like a regular update, even adding a Microsoft Copyright to the file properties. A phony windows Update screen is displayed and the ransomware quietly infects the system in the background. There's no way to stop this, but prevention is the key. Make sure you have your anti-virus software up to date so your machine doesn't get infected. Now you know why I say it's time to upgrade to the paid version of security!!!



Microsoft is taking action! Illegal downloads of music, movies, games, software etc. has been going on for years. I'm sure you've seen the news where artists are fighting to stop on-line websites from pirating their work. It's become a major problem and file sharing has increased dramatically. Did you know that they can track those downloads to your computer? And that you could pay a hefty fine of thousands of dollars and jail time? Yup, it's true! So now Microsoft has decided that in Windows 10 they can "detect and disable" your programs and they will..now you know what Cortana is doing!



OK.....Let's change to some iPad, iPhone or iPod tips!

Maximize Battery Life - Keep Your iDevice Out of the Sun

Whatever you do, don't leave your iPhone or iPod sitting in a hot car—heat kills batteries faster than any other factor, and your device that used to keep a charge for hours will eventually barely hold a charge, and you'll have to pay Apple to get it replaced. The same thing holds true for any really hot environment: try and store your device in a cool place.

Reduce the Screen Brightness

If you keep the screen at maximum brightness all the time, you're wasting a lot of battery life—and the screens these days are so bright anyway that you don't really need to, especially at night. Head into Settings -> Brightness & Wallpaper to adjust the default level of brightness, which you can probably keep as low as 30% most of the time.

Make Sure the Screen Locks Quickly

Even if you've adjusted the screen brightness, there's still no substitute for having it turn off quickly when you're not using it. Head into General -> Auto-Lock to set the screen lock to happen as quickly as your device will let you. This makes a big difference if you are always picking up your phone and putting it back into your pocket without turning the display off.

Time.com had a good article on tips that will change how you use your iPad. The link below will give you a lot of great information! This should keep you busy for a while! 😊

<http://time.com/4107304/ipad-tips-features/>

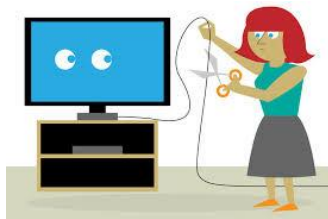
Like I said, this has been quite a month! My iMac needed to be updated for security and the update crashed my machine. I couldn't turn it off because launcher crashed...and it couldn't launch the shutdown. Sound confusing? It was just frustrating. I did get it fixed and with a program that I've heard about for years but never put on my machine. If you're a Mac user and have startup and shutdown problems, I would recommend that you download and install **OnyX**. It can be downloaded from **Titanium Software**.

One thing you **NEED** to do is your updates on your Apple machines. It's not like Windows where they do them automatically. You have to set it up. If you want to have your Mac automatically check for updates and install them, here's what you need to do.

- Choose System Preferences from the Apple Menu
- Click App Store
- Select Settings
- Check the actions you want to take place



Grab....have you heard of it? It's a "capture" tool for saving information in a tagged Image Format. .tiff. A lot of Mac users don't even know they have it on their machines. Go to finder, Applications, Utilities folder, and look for "grab". Click and drag it to your dock and you can use it to save articles off the internet. You can also go to "**Go**" on the Apple toolbar. Applications is in the list there.



Cutting cable is a big decision and you need to weigh the alternatives before you jump into making the move. An article in the **Schenectady Gazette** said that an estimated 812,000 subscribers pulled the plug on their TV service in the second quarter of this year. Many are turning to **Netflix, Amazon.com, Hulu and CBS All Access** which are more affordable. They stream their shows from their

devices to their TV's and pay a lot less than what they're present cable bills have been. We still need to find out what Charter is going to do since Time Warner no longer exists. The only thing I've found out is that we're going to have to change our email addresses. ☹ Things have been really hushed up by the company.



I found this video on how to cut cable and watch baseball. I was thinking of my friend [Tom Miller](#) when I saw it. 😊 Kim Komando explains how to watch the games you want without paying big cable prices and what the alternative plans are.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkOhyYvzGNE>



Computer Term of the Month

Rootkit - A collection of software tools that help enable someone to gain unauthorized access to a computer or other network device. Rootkits often hide the actions of the user and have been created for Unix variants, Linux variants, and Microsoft Windows.



Now I'm ready for a well-deserved vacation! John and I will be gone from the 11th of September until the 19th of September. Our favorite place in Cape Cod is waiting for us. ☺ If you want to leave a message while we're away, I'll get back to you as soon as we return.

Have a good holiday weekend!

Warm Regards,

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