Bits and Bytes
May 2012

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club

Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

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RAM VS. VIRTUAL MEMORY

There are two main types of memory: Physical Memory – called RAM and virtual memory which is memory that Windows creates from unused hard drive space.

RAM (physical memory) is very fast - almost instantaneous. Most programs, when you run them, are loaded into your RAM and then run from your RAM. On the other hand, your hard drive spins and Windows has to constantly search the drive to find whatever it is looking for. When Windows is forced to use virtual memory instead of physical memory (RAM) -- because no more physical memory is available -- it slows your computer down, and programs may seem slow or unresponsive. In a virtual memory state you will often hear your hard drive spinning constantly. This is why computers which do not have enough RAM installed often become slow and unresponsive and sometimes crash.

There's no substitute for having enough physical memory (RAM) installed in your computer. You should always try to stay out of a virtual memory situation where Windows is forced to use hard drive space as memory in order to keep the system functioning. In the virtual

memory state, starting more programs may cause your computer to freeze and then crash.

Windows Vista, Window 7, and Windows 8 users can avoid virtual memory situations by using a ReadyBoost-ready USB flash drive to add extra memory to their computers. While memory created from a flash drive isn't as fast as RAM it's much faster than memory created from free space on the hard drive (virtual memory). ReadyBoost supplements your installed RAM but it is not a substitute for RAM. The best thing you can do to ensure your computer remains fast and responsive is to make sure you have enough RAM installed. For Windows XP users we recommend no less than 1GB of RAM. For Vista and Windows 7 users we recommend a minimum of 4GB or RAM.

To summarize: Physical Memory or RAM is the fastest memory - and if you have enough RAM this is the memory Windows will always use to run applications and services. Virtual memory is created by Windows from free hard drive space and is used only when there isn't enough physical memory (RAM) available to run programs and services and the operating system

FACEBOOK OFFERS FREE SECURITY SOFTWARE— but wait! It's not really Free

It's all about the money. Facebook's (supposed) 901 million users will be treated to "free" security software from Norton, McAfee, Trend Micro and Sophos but it's not really free. If you are a Facebook user you're going to have access to some of the biggest names in the security software business — free.

But it's not free. Norton and its ilk have taken a beating from the free (and better) antivirus programs but they're not giving up. It's all about the money.

The "free" versions that Facebook are offering are nothing more than the extended trial versions that computer manufacturers have been putting on computers for years. And 901 million Face-bookers are now going to be inundated with advertising and sales pitches along with warnings about their online safety. Do you really think Facebook cares about your online safety? If they did they'd not be paying fines to the FTC for playing with your privacy. Nope. It's all about the money.

Even if they were free — they're not free because the software these security suites install on your computer is almost as bad as the malware they supposedly protect you from. Once installed, it's hard to remove Norton, McAfee, Sophos or Trend Micro without doing it in Safe Mode and using a special uninstaller you can download from their respective sites (if you can muddle your way through their labyrinth of convoluted downloads).

But they're not free — they're six-month trial versions designed to entrap you in a never-ending cycle of annual payments. And all for what? Mediocre protection at best – that's what.

Those of you who are using Facebook beware. You're going to be besieged with warnings about your security and offered "free" security software that is not free at all. Don't be fooled. Don't be misled. The free antivirus/security software avail-able is every bit as good as any of the brand names that Facebook is offering you "not-so-free". Facebook isn't doing you any favors — they're raking in a ton of cash from those security companies – and that's why they're doing it

Here's more about this Facebook "offer" from "PC World:"

"Facebook on Wednesday teamed up with several leading antivirus firms to launch an Antivirus Marketplace, which will allow users to download a six-month free trial of the companies' software.

The marketplace is currently offering products from McAfee, Norton, Microsoft, Sophos, and Trend Micro.

'We believe that arming our users with antivirus software will help empower them to stay safe no matter where they are on the web,' Facebook said in a blog post.
Facebook's 901 million users can download free copies of McAfee Internet Security, Norton AntiVirus, Microsoft Security Essentials, Sophos Anti-Virus for Mac Home Edition, and Trend Micro Security.

The security companies will also contribute posts to Facebook's Security Blog with information about how to stay safe on the social network. "Truly effective security requires co-operation," Facebook said.

In addition to the free downloads, Facebook will also expand its URL blacklist system to incorporate the malicious URL databases from McAfee, Norton, Microsoft, Sophos, and Trend Micro…"

You don't need this — you don't need to clutter up your computer or get drawn into an endless cycle of $50-per-year security-service subscriptions. You don't need to install software on your computer that makes you jump through hoops to uninstall it.

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Welcome

"April" New Club Members

Pat Steck	Fred Albitz
Mel Mastricola	Rusty Mastricola
Bob Shewmake	Marion Korns
Shirley Schingman	Anna Ahiman
James Abbott	Wanda Abbott
Wayne Rimkins	

The Club membership now totals 206 members.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: MAY 2012

* **Basic Windows 7 –** May 15, 17 – 10 am to noon
* **Genealogy Special Interest Group –** May 19 – 10 am
* **Microsoft Word –** May 22, 24 – 10 am to noon
* **Digital Photography, camera to computer –** May 23 – 9 am to noon
* **PC Maintenance, protect and recover –** May 23 – 9 am to noon
* **Microsoft Publisher –** May 29, 31 – 10 am to noon

Classes and open house clinics are free to Computer Club members.   Club membership fee-$20; ½ price for each additional family member.

Pre-registration is mandatory. 479.273.2558

Club Officers

Nan DeLany	268-3264	President
Chuck Billman	855-4188	Vice President
Julie Storm	696-8867	Secretary
Judi Shannon	876-2400	Treasurer

Board Members

Nancy Jones	855-3350	Marie Herr	273-2558
Don Shaltz	855-6974		

WINDOWS KEY SHORTCUTS

* Win+Space operates as a keyboard shortcut for Aero Peek.
* Win+Up and Win+Down are new shortcuts for Maximize and Restore/Minimize.
* Win+Shift+Up vertically maximizes the current window
* Win+Shift+Left and Win+Shift+Right move the current window to the left or right display.
* Win+ + and Win+ – (plus and minus sign) zoom the desktop in and out.

* Win+D – Toggle showing the desktop

* Win+E – Run Windows Explorer.
* Win+F – Search window.
* Win+G – Displays all the Gadgets above other windows.
* Win+L – Lock the computer.

* Win+M – Minimize all open windows
* Win+Shift+M – Undo all window minimization
* Win+P – shows external display option selector
* Win+R – Open Run command.

* Win+S – OneNote Screen Clipping Tool

* Win+T – provides keyboard focus to the taskbar, then cycles the keyboard focus through taskbar items. (Win+1 through Win+0 provides shortcuts to the first ten pinned taskbar items

* Win+U – Open Ease of Access Center.
* Win+X – Run Windows Mobility Center.

The tips above work with Windows 7 – all versions. Many of these will work on Windows XP and Windows Vista too.

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS MAY

LOSE INTERNET IN JULY

Question: Carol asks if this is fact or fiction. An article reported on Yahoo http://news.yahoo.com/hundreds-thousands-may-lose–internet-july-181324701-finance.html

Answer: It's true. We featured an article a couple of months ago when this was speculation. For the sake of brevity, we'll include the gist of the article you cite here:

"For computer users, a few mouse clicks could mean the difference between staying online and losing Internet connections this summer.

Unknown to most of them, their problem began international hackers ran an online advertising scam to take control of infected computers around the world. In a highly unusual response, the FBI set up a safety net months ago using government computers to prevent Internet disruptions for those infected users. But that system is to be shut down.

The FBI is encouraging users to visit a website run by its security partner, http://www.dcwg.org , that will inform them whether they're infected and explain how to fix the problem. After July 9, infected users won't be able to connect to the Internet.

Most victims don't even know their computers have been infected, although the malicious software probably has slowed their web surfing and disabled their antivirus software, making their machines more vulnerable to other problems..."

For 99% of you there will be no problem as most of you have protected your computers with good antivirus/antispyware software, kept your Windows operating system up-to-date, you're not still using IE6 and you have been diligent about not clicking links in phishing and spam emails. But even though most of you don't have anything to worry about -- it's still worth a trip to http://www.dcwg.org just to make sure. It will take you less than two minutes. If you're safe, you'll see this image and some text verifying you're safe:

As to whether or not the FBI will shut down infected computers, we are not sure. The FBI isn't clear on what steps they may take. But still, peace of mind is free and will only take you 2 minutes. Visit http://www.dcwg.org just to be on the safe side.

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How to check your computer? An industry wide team has developed easy "are you infected" web sites. They are a quick way to determine if you are infected with DNS Changer. Each site is designed for any normal computer user to browse to a link, follow the instructions, and see if they might be infected. Each site has instructions in their local languages on the next steps to clean up possible infections.

For example, the http://www.dns-ok.us/ will state if you are or are not infected (see below).
♦ **No Software is Downloaded!** The tools do not need to to load any software on your computer to perform the check.
♦ **No changes are performed on your computer!** Nothing is changed on your computer when you use sites like http://www.dns-ok.us/.
• **No scanning!** The "are you infected with DNS Changer" tool does not need to scan your computer.

If you think your computer is infected with DNS Changer or any other malware, please refer to the security guides from your operating system or the self -help references from our fix page (http://www.dcwg.org/fix).