

Bits and Bytes

June 2014

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club

Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

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HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE RUNNING WINDOWS 8.1X UPDATE

When you updated from 8.0 to 8.1, you really knew it. You had to download and install it and sometimes there were problems. But upgrading to 8.1 Update isn't so obvious because it's not something you actually download and install. If you have Windows 8.1 installed and Windows Updates set to check for updates automatically then you have or will have Windows 8.1 Update installed. And remember, it's really important that you do have 8.1 Update because Microsoft won't be releasing any future bug fixes or security updates for Win8.x users who aren't running 8.1 Update. So leave Windows Updates turned on and you'll have nothing at all to worry about.

People have been writing us because they are having trouble determining if they have Windows 8.1 Update installed. And we can understand that because there really is no easy way to check and see if Windows 8.1 Update has been installed. You can't look at the properties of This PC (My Computer) and tell because the Windows version number won't say Windows 8.1 Update, it will continue to say Windows 8.1.

So here's 2 easy ways to tell if you have Windows 8.1 Update:

1. If your Start screen now has a search button that looks like a magnifying glass in the top right hand corner, you're running Windows 8.1 Update



2. If right-clicking on a tile in the Start Screen brings up a menu, then you're running Windows 8.1 Update.



If neither of these applies to you, be sure you have Windows Updates turned on and you will get the Windows 8.1 Update automatically. No worries. Copyright 2008 by Cloud-eight Internet. <http://thundercloud.net/infoave/index.html>

Open houses for Computer Repair & Help

June 18th (10 am — 1 pm) (Wednesday)

July 2nd (1 pm — 4 pm) (Wednesday)

July 5th (10 am — 1 pm) (Saturday)

FUTURE MEETING PROGRAMS

July Q & A with a Panel of Experts

Aug. Ways and Places to Store and Display Your Photos.
ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

USING WINDOWS MOBILITY CENTER

Windows 7

If you use a laptop, you can quickly access settings (for example, speaker volume, wireless network connection status, and display brightness) in Windows Mobility Center. All of these settings are in one location, so you save time and don't need to remember where each setting is located. **To open Windows Mobility Center:** Click the **Start** Button, click **Control Panel**, Click **Hardware & Sound** and clicking **Windows Mobility Center**, or type Windows Mobility Center in the start menu search box. Mobility Center displays the most commonly used settings, such as brightness, volume, battery status, wireless network status, screen rotation, external display and sync center. Different tiles are displayed depending on your system, and some tiles are added by your laptop manufacturer. If a setting doesn't appear, it might be because the required hardware, such as a wireless network adapter, or driver is missing or turned off. For example, if the **Turn wireless on** button is unavailable, you might need to use the hardware switch on your computer to turn on the wireless adapter. **Tip:** *Click an icon to quickly open options for that setting. For example, click the battery icon to open Power Options, and from there, select a power plan.*

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/using-mobility-center#1TC=windows-7>

NORTON (SYMANTEC) SAYS: "ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE IS DEAD"

Antivirus software only catches 45% of malware attacks and is "dead", according to a senior manager at Symantec.

Remarks by Brian Dye, senior vice-president for information security at the company, which invented commercial antivirus software in the 1980s and now develops and sells Norton Antivirus, suggest that such software leaves users vulnerable.

Dye told the Wall Street Journal that hackers increasingly use novel methods and bugs in the software of computers to perform attacks, resulting in about 55% cyber attacks going unnoticed by commercial antivirus software. Malware has become increasingly complex. Computer viruses range from relatively simple criminal attacks, where credit card information is targeted, to espionage programs that spy on users and data but can easily be upgraded into cyber weapons at the touch of a button, according to security expert Eugene Kaspersky, founder of Kaspersky Anti-virus.

That failure to detect issues is forcing Symantec, to diversify its products, and switch to the detect and respond mode meaning tracking data leaks, hacks and other intrusions and preventing further repercussions from stolen data. For users, that means changing passwords, but for businesses that often means stopping access to accounts and services that have been subject to data loss or infiltration, as well as tracking the source of the intrusion and shoring up cyber defenses – something governments have been doing with new cyber response teams. Antivirus still accounts for 40% of the company's revenue, however, and while other security companies such as Kaspersky and Intel's McAfee have already moved in that direction. Symantec lags the movement. <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/may/06/antivirus-software-fails-catch-attacks-security-expert-symantec>

NOTE: ANOTHER REASON TO NOT USE NORTON !

Dennis is concerned about Chrome

I am concerned I changed to Google Chrome as advised, Today I logged in and got an add-on according to them based on my browsing habits. After some searching it is obvious they are in possession of everything I do. what concerns me are they collecting my passwords. In their settings this has not been ticked. I keep my bank account details separate from password managers so no one can hack me but now I am wondering how secure I am. PS the last time I logged in there was an add with a website for Asian wives I am 73 years old and have been happily married for 49 years so much for their research.

Our answer

Hi Dennis. Most importantly - it's not true that Google or anyone else collects your passwords. All browsers have a password save feature but that's for your convenience not for Microsoft, Google or Firefox's benefit. And we strongly recommend that you do not use the browser's password saving feature - not because the company that makes the browser is collecting your passwords, but because anyone who uses your computer can instantly access any of your password protected accounts.

But we understand why you feel the way you do and why you're concerned. Misinformation spreads like wildfire on the Web - and the Web is full of it. It's no wonder why so many people believe all kinds of things about Google, Microsoft, Facebook and other Internet giants. The truth is - if any company the size of Google was ever caught collecting users' passwords the damage that would be done to that company from negative publicity would be astounding - and would rock the entire industry. Big Internet companies are not stupid enough to allow that kind of thing to happen. However, tech writers and journalists love to use sensationalism to garner more readers and thus more income. A good portion of these so-called tech writers either don't understand what they're writing about, or understand and deliberately distort the facts in order to attract attention and more readers. It's all about the money.

(continue with next column.....)

And your question proves what we are saying. It seems every blogger and news organization is in a race to out do and one-up the others. Sadly, the information we get from news sources isn't always accurate, and isn't always true. And it continues to get worse and worse as time goes by.

When we first looked at your question the first thing we notice is a disconnect. First you say they're showing you ads based on your browsing habits, then you say they're showing you ads for Asian wives - and you've been happily married for 49 years. What you seem to be saying at the beginning is that you're seeing ads based on your browsing habits -- if that's so, are you saying you've been browsing for Asian wives? Do you see what we mean? Actually, what you're most likely seeing are ads being injected, not by Google, but by a malware toolbar installed in your browser.

It's ridiculous how the media focuses on "ads based on your browsing history" as if this was something new and extremely harmful. We would much rather see ads for what we like than ads for things in which we're not interested. For example, we'd much rather see ads for good deals on laptop computers than ads for basketball shoes.

And the problem with all this is, it takes your attention away from serious problems like malware, hijackers, and TCP/IP changers that route your Internet connection through proxies owned by miscreant and criminals.

Many people have been duped into believing Google Chrome is doing something that other browsers do not -- and this is not true. Advertisers pay more for targeted ads - ads which target groups of people which are likely to be more interested in their products than the public in general.

But targeted ads isn't exclusive to the Internet. Grocery stores that issue membership cards offer customers discounts on groceries. Most probably see nothing wrong with that. However, the grocery store is tracking

(continue on page 4 "Chrome")

“Chrome” continued:.....everything you buy when you use your membership card, and you're very likely to see direct mail advertisements for the products or similar products you buy most. What's the difference between tracking your shopping habits and tracking what you look at online.

Google isn't doing anything nefarious. Your IP address, assigned by your ISP is the identifier of your computer on the vast network of the Internet. However your IP address only gives your geographical location, it does not give your street address, telephone number, name, or other personal information, unless they are requested by and by authorities with a valid warrant.

Every Web site knows your geographical location. Every browser keeps track of the pages you visit. If you expect any degree of privacy on the Internet, you're dreaming. If you want privacy use Chrome (or whatever other browser you prefer) in Incognito mode and buy a good VPN program like CyberGhost to obfuscate your IP address and your location. If you want to take it one step further, install Zen in Chrome and run CyberGhost too. Then your leaked IP will be your CyberGhost IP and your 'real' IP will be the fake IP displayed by Zen.

Finally, Google does offer you control over the ads you see. In fact, you can opt-out of all ads based on the pages you visit -- and see only random ads, or ads not based on your interests. Here's what Google has to say:

You can use Ads Settings <http://www.google.com/ads/preferences/?hl=en> to manage the Google ads you see. You can also manage many companies' cookies used for online advertising at the US-based <http://aboutads.info> choices page or the EU-based Your Online Choices <http://www.youronlinechoices.com/uk/your-ad-choices>. (continue next column)

Finally, you can manage cookies in your web browser.

Everyone is out to make a buck and there is nothing that motivates bloggers or news sources more than getting more traffic.

With all of the real threats to your privacy such as government snooping, rogue software, Trojans, malware, browser hijackers, and software bundling, worrying about ad tracking is simply taking your eye of the ball.

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NEED A REMINDER ON YOUR DESKTOP?

Windows XP , Vista, Windows 7,
Windows 8.1

Do you ever need a reminder for a job to do, or need to pick up something at the store on the way home? A little reminder on the desktop of your computer may be just the answer. It doesn't require any special software program. It's already in your computer and very easy to do.

Go to your desktop and right-click on a empty area of the desktop screen. Then in the dropdown box, choose "New" and select "Folder", or Text Document" or "Rich text document". You can then give the item a name which is the reminder such as: "Buy milk", "Pick up Jodi from school", or "Pick up the Mail". You can even keep track of your appointments like "Dr. @ 3 pm Wednesday. It so easy to do and just right-click to delete it later. Best part, no software to download or install.

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