



# WAUCtalk

WAUC Wisconsin All-computer Users Club

October 2015

## Defense of Blue Screen of Death

Volume 32 No. 10

### October

**22 Tablets Plus SIG, Thur., 7:00**

Clement Manor, Rm 107,  
9405 W. Howard

**28 Investment Tracking SIG, 7:00 PM**

Wendy's, 7707 W. Layton Ave.

**Topic: Vectorvest**

### November

**5 WAUC General Meeting, Thur., 7:00 PM**

Jackson Park Lutheran Church  
4535 W. Oklahoma Ave.

**Topic: Peter Lee: Running Windows on a Mac**

**5 Exec. Bd. Meeting, 6:15**

**10 Deadline for submitting articles for WAUCtalk**

**11 MacSIG, Wed. 6:30 PM**

Clement Manor, Rm 107,  
9405 W. Howard

**12 Tutorial SIG: Thur., 7:00 PM**

Speedway Station, 60th & Layton Ave.

**Topic: CDs of the Month Greatest Hits**

**16 WAUC Lunch, Mon., 1 PM, Old Country Buffet,**

4902 S. 74th

RSVP: [rgdurand@yahoo.com](mailto:rgdurand@yahoo.com)

**19 Q&A SIG, Thur., 7:00 PM**

Speedway Station, 60th & Layton Ave.

**19 Tablets Plus SIG, Thur., 7:00**

Clement Manor, Rm 107,  
9405 W. Howard

**25 Investment Tracking SIG, 7:00 PM**

Wendy's, 7707 W. Layton Ave.

**Topic: Vectorvest**

### Future Presentations:

•December: Holiday party

"If I had a nickel for every time that Windows crashes ... oh, wait, I do." -- Bill Gates. (If Bill Gates never actually said this, he should have. :))

The BSOD, of course, is the notorious "Blue Screen of Death," that wonderful helpful screen that Windows displays when it is stumped and can't go on anymore. There used to be a webpage devoted to various BSODs displayed in public, on ATMs and at airports. I used to see them quite frequently when the county buses had something called "Transit TV." Of course, this affliction isn't limited to Windows. OS/2 has a similar screen in (appropriately enough) black. Linux has something called the "kernel oops."

For most of us the BSOD is an inconvenience and most of the time we just restart the computer and everything is fine -- after the running of CHKDSK and maybe one more reboot. But I'm in a situation now where I would really like to see a BSOD.

I'm attempting to write my own operating system. So far I have written the boot code and most of the real-mode configurator and loader program. I have begun working on the microkernel, the code at the very heart of the system. At the moment I am working on the physical memory management part and recently spent all night trying to track down a particularly nasty problem.

I do not test my system on my machine directly, I use an emulator called Bochs. (Pronounced "box.") Most of the problems I've been having have been due to page faults not being handled properly. My handlers for exceptions do nothing and just get out. I am not ready to handle exceptions yet, indeed this is the code that is setting up physical memory so that I can handle page faults. I have a chicken when I can only handle eggs. The result is that Bochs quits on me and I am left looking at the log to figure out why there were three unresolved page faults in a row.

So I've come to the ironic realization that one of the first "features" I will have to write is the BSOD! Until I have code in place to really handle the exceptions I will have to put up the BSOD first and then let Bochs give me my lumps. The BSOD can give me a better indication than the Bochs log about WHERE the problem took place. The BSOD will be of great service to me even though the goal is to make it a rare occurrence, even rarer than Windows!

*Gary Kohler  
Vice-President of WAUC*

## Raffle Items for November

•WAUC sweatshirt in choice of size and color

The available sweatshirts are:

Dark Blue in size Small

Gold in size Medium

Light Grey in size Medium

Red in size Large

•16 Gb USB Flash Drive

•O'Reilly computer book "iWork The Missing Manual"

•Certificate for free O'Reilly computer ebook download

•USB card reader

## WAUC

WAUCtalk is a monthly publication of the Wisconsin All-computer Users Club. WAUC is a computer club dedicated to promoting and instructing the use of computers to WAUC members. Membership in WAUC is \$25 per year (\$12.50 if applying after June 1). WAUCtalk is emailed to all WAUC members.

Free advertising is available to WAUC members. We are not responsible for omissions or errors.

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## Future Offers Party, Windows 10, Peter Lee

The WAUC General Meeting for October 2015 was called to order at 7:00 PM by Vice-President Gary Kohler. There were no new members or guests. Treasurer Bill Gierach gave the Treasurer's Report with the Treasury having a beginning balance of \$1,474.56, expenses of \$25.28, which resulted in a closing balance of \$1,449.28. Members were asked if they were receiving their emailed and printed copies of WAUCtalk and there were no problems reported. Members were reminded that the annual election of WAUC Officers will be held next month and everyone who is interested is welcome and encouraged to run for office. It was announced that the sign up sheet for bringing a dish to pass at the WAUC Holiday Party coming up in December is available at the registration table in the back.

Program Chairperson Terry Harvey was called upon to tell the members about future presentations. For November, Peter Lee will be giving a presentation about running Windows on a Mac. There will not be a presentation at the December meeting as this is the occasion for the WAUC Holiday party. Member Dr. Len Levine usually gives the presentation at the January meeting and he is being contacted about doing it again. Julia Rice said that Peter Lee might be able to assist in contacting Len Levine.

The WAUC schedule of events for the month of October was reviewed. Following tonight's General Meeting, there will again be an informal get-together of members at the nearby Wendy's located at 43<sup>rd</sup> and Lincoln. The Tutorial SIG will be held one week from tonight, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>, at the Speedway Station, and the topics will be Trust Install for Windows updates and customizing Firefox, which will be a continuation of last month's topics, and also there will be demonstrations of the greatest hits of the WAUC CDs of the Month. The WAUC Lunch will be held at 1:00 PM on October 12<sup>th</sup> at Old Country Buffet.

Louise Dahms reported that at last month's Mac SIG, members studied the Mac operating system and an inquiry is going to be made of the location, Clement Manor, about getting a storage locker for club equipment. The Mac SIG for October will be held at 6:30 PM on October 14<sup>th</sup> at Clement Manor and members are welcome to make a reservation for a meal there before the SIG. Richard Durand reported that at last month's Q&A SIG, questions dealt with included using a renumbering program for photo files and then creating a slide show creating PDF files, and creating Restore Points. The next Q&A SIG will be held at the Speedway Station at 7:00 PM on October 15<sup>th</sup> and will include WAUC's One on One Computer Service. Bring your computer if you would like to have it looked at.

Terry Harvey described the Tablets Plus SIG last month as very successful, with twenty people attending, including a lot of guests. About half were Apple iPad users and the other half were Android users. There were so many, that an inquiry is being made of Clement Manor for an additional meeting room so that each group will have their own. Among other things, members learned about transferring files from a device to its SD memory card and how to use Google

Maps. Looking ahead, the Tablet Plus SIG date for November will fall on Thanksgiving so it was proposed that the SIG meet a week earlier on November 19<sup>th</sup>. This will also be the date of the Q&A SIG for November so members will have a choice.

Richard reported that the WAUC Investment SIG resumed last month, after being off for the summer months. The group warmed up with an online computer game version of Deal or No Deal, in which the Deal was finally accepted for \$131,000.00, and then stocks were looked up online and an online video about the investment service Vectorvest was watched. The Investment SIG will meet again at 7:00 PM on October 28<sup>th</sup> at Wendy's, 7707 W. Layton. In closing the schedule review, it was again announced that there will again be the usual informal get-together at Wendy's after the meeting.

Bill Gierach described the contents of the current CD of the month. The current raffle prizes were announced and described. It was announced that there are some items on the table in the back, free for the taking, including some issues of Wired Magazine. Gary brought up the subject of the new Microsoft operating system. By a show of hands, four members have upgraded to Windows 10. Plans were described for featuring Windows 10 at the Tutorial SIG in the future. WAUC will acquire and install Windows 10 on the club laptop, using Virtual Box of course, and also acquire and run the Professor Teaches Tutorial software at the SIG. This will not take place until this new operating system is updated and becomes more reliable and there are enough members interested in learning about it.

And then the club went into its discussion of computer questions, problems, and industry news, handled for the most part by Gary Kohler and Bill Gierach. The first comment was from Member Bill Vlach, who says the use of Skype has vastly increased his time in meetings at work. Bill Gierach, the club's foremost proponent of the Linux operating system, pointed out that Microsoft has changed over to using the Linux for its servers. Julia Rice had a recent problem in not being able to log on to the WiFi signal during a visit to a nursing home, even though she had the password. Bill replied that the WiFi system there might have had a limit set up for the number of users and that Julia was exceeding the limit. Gary credited the situation as another

example of the "critical need sensor," the mysterious malevolent element that deliberately shuts down computers when users really need to use them. Don Gardner asked about the Internet currency Bitcoin, and Bill said that its value fluctuates too much to be useful. Bill Vlach explained how for those he works with, the use of Bitcoin is part the transition of computing capacity to the so-called Cloud. Gary reminded everyone of the vulnerability of having one's data stored on the Cloud and predicted the Cloud's ultimate collapse. Bruce Kosbab reminded everyone that Microsoft is having an online event this coming Tuesday to announce their new their new Windows 10 devices. These were some of the issues discussed before going into the mid-meeting break.

When we returned, and after the drawing for the raffle, Gary called attention to the new WAUC brochures that had just been printed. Members were welcome to take a few and distribute them at potentially promising locations.

After these preliminaries, Bill conducted his demonstration using a video camera connected to the club projector so that everyone could see his demo up close. He first showed a layout of the tools he uses for working on computers, for example, screwdrivers, tweezers, and magnets for recovering dropped screws. And then he showed where to find the various parts and components of the interior of a computer such as the RAM, the sound card, the DVD drive, the hard drive, and the little-known but important CMOS battery. One useful thing he passed along was when stumped for how to do something, an easily accessed source of information is Youtube. After demonstrating for some time on a desktop machine, Bill turned to the product that has overtaken the desktop, the laptop. These machines have to be designed and built to include everything in a much smaller space and thus also create their own set of unique challenges for repair. As time expired, Bill stated that there was a lot more information he didn't get to. And that was it for the WAUC General Meeting of October, 2015, which adjourned a little after 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

*Richard Durand*  
*WAUC General Meeting Secretary*

## Board Plans Presentations, Party Food, Prizes, SIGs

The WAUC Board Meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, was called to order at 6:23 PM. Present were Vice-President Gary Kohler, Treasurer Bill Gierach, General Meeting Secretary Richard Durand, and WAUCtalk Editor Julia Rice. Officers were reminded to sign on the sign-in sheet and create a name tag for themselves. Julia informed everyone that the due date for the next WAUCtalk is October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Bill reported that the WAUC treasury is in fairly good shape with a current balance of around \$1,449.00. The annually required report and \$10.00 organization fee to the State of Wisconsin has been completed and sent in. The new WAUC Brochure has been completed, printed on bright yellow stock, folded, and was available for examination.

The Board continued to give attention to acquiring raffle prizes for WAUC. Bill reported that he had acquired the gift card from Milwaukee PC to be offered as a raffle prize for the current meeting. He also reported that he had acquired a number of 16 Gigabyte USB flash drives which were on sale for \$5.00 each. Richard had acquired a USB card reader to be offered as a raffle prize.

The Board next discussed the topic for upcoming Tutorial SIGs. The topic for October has been announced in publications as Trusted Install and Firefox but will also include demonstrations of the programs on the CDs of the Month. For the future, WAUC is looking into exploring the new MS operating system, Windows 10, at the Tutorial SIG. Richard reported that Professor Teaches, which we have used in the past, offers Tutorial software on Windows 10, available on Amazon, for \$14.99 as a download and for \$19.99 on a disk. Bill, who conducts the Tutorial SIG, said that it would be better to purchase Windows 10 on disk, for about \$109.00, instead of downloading it for free, because then it can be installed on a virtual box of the club laptop, as with XP and Windows 8.1. We need to have Windows 10 running while going through the tutorial lessons to see how it works for ourselves. Per Bill, Windows 10 is still too new for WAUC to acquire. The Board agreed that Windows 10 and its teaching programs will be acquired when Windows 10 is really ready.

About this time, former WAUC President, Lifetime member, and invited guest, Bruce Kosbab arrived. The meeting continued, turning to the topic of presentations for future meetings. Bill is giving the presentation for this evening, taking a look at the interior of computers. For November, WAUC member Peter Lee will give a presentation about running Windows on a Mac, and the WAUC Holiday

Party will be held in December. Some ideas mentioned for meetings in 2016 were the return of member Len Levine, one by a lady from Waterford on how to sell things on Ebay, and another APCUG online presentation by Abby Stokes,. Bruce Kosbab said the guy from Cartridge World that he supports is willing to give a presentation to us about ink cartridges.

Since the WAUC Holiday Party is coming up, there was some discussion about what to get for it. Bruce, who usually picks up the meat for WAUC parties, said that six pounds of two kinds of meat should be enough for a WAUC party. After some back and forth, the Board settled on getting ham and turkey. Bruce will be out of town at the time of the December meeting and someone else will have to pick up the meat, which needs to be done by 5:30 PM, when Bunzel's closes. As required by the WAUC Bylaws, the annual election of officers will take place next month, at the November meeting. And as has been done previously, Julia agreed to again produce the ballots in case they are necessary. It was observed that for the month of October, the Tablet SIG will take place the week before the Investment SIG, a peculiarity of the calendar. In November, the Tablets Plus SIG will fall on Thanksgiving Day and the Investment SIG will be the evening before. The Board agreed that the Investment SIG will be included on the calendar and the Tablets Plus SIG will be skipped, though it is understood that the members attending these SIGs will have the final say about holding these SIGs or not.

These were the subjects discussed at the WAUC Board Meeting for October 2015. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Richard Durand*  
WAUC General Meeting Secretary

### *Address Change*

If you are changing your email or home address, please note:

**Email address changes** should sent to Richard Durand at [rgdurand@bigfoot.com](mailto:rgdurand@bigfoot.com) and Bill Gierach at [wdgierach@yahoo.com](mailto:wdgierach@yahoo.com). **Home address changes** should sent to Bill Gierach at [wdgierach@yahoo.com](mailto:wdgierach@yahoo.com).

## SIG Notes by Terry Harvey

### Q&A SIG Deals with Slide Rename, Media Player, .Pdfs and .DLLs

Those in attendance at the Q&A SIG on September 17 were Richard Durand, Tom Hermann, Lucille Stahl, Marcia Zientek, Bob and Terry Harvey, Bill Gierach, Dolores Dettmann, Christine Harris, Tom Livermore, and Gary Kohler.

Tom H. had a few questions regarding some old slides he has. He has sixty-four 3½" floppies and numerous CD's filled with slides. He has been unable to give each slide its own number. Every time he opened a new folder the number given to the first slide was always 0001. He wants continuous numbers. Bill installed a program called, RON'S RENAMER, which was on the June, 2015 CDOM. He put all the folders from one floppy into one folder. He went to MARK and put a check mark in the very top square which then puts a check in all the boxes below that category. Under NEW RULE SET, click on ADD NUMBERS and put a check mark next to the box that appears to the right. Move further down and to the right, and under NUMBER PROPERTIES, in the START box put the numeral one. Below that it will show boxes STEP (the number 1 will show there), and in the ZEROS box put the number 2 there. In the box below that is a box called PADDING. Put in an identifying word. Bill used Crater Lake as these were Tom H.'s pictures of Crater Lake. Crater Lake was then attached to every picture as were consecutive numbers. Then click on the RENAME button on the upper right side of the screen.

Marcia had a problem along these same lines. She wants to group all her pictures from a recent trip into a slideshow. She manually numbered them all but, when she transferred them to her tablet and cell phone, they didn't follow sequentially. A few pictures were out of order. It was suggested she try the program, IRFANVIEW. It's another program that has been included in a previous CDOM. Under FILE, select SLIDESHOW. Go to LOOK IN and locate where you have your photos stored. The picture names or numbers will appear in the box. Click on ADD ALL. You can then go back to LOOK IN and locate additional pictures you may have in other folders. You can click on any photo name or number and it will appear in the PREVIEW IMAGE box. When you're satisfied with the order, click on SAVE SLIDESHOW AS EXE/SCR and your changes are made. IRFANVIEW seemed much easier to use and

its other functions are listed on <http://www.irfanview.com>.

Marcia recently experienced another problem which had to do with ePub books downloaded from the public library. She prefers to read digital books on her Kindle reader but the Kindle doesn't recognize the ePub format. She looked online and found there was a program called CALIBRE that will convert ePub books to the Kindle format. However, CALIBRE asks for a password which she didn't know. Bill went to a CALIBRE newsgroup where the question had been asked and answered. She must right click and type RUN AS ADMINISTRATOR.

Dolores had a question regarding VLC, a media player, she uses on a Windows XP computer. When she looks in her folder, some songs have the VLC icon in front of the song name and some songs have the Windows Media Player icon in front of them. She would prefer all the files be played by VLC. Bill advised her to go to one of the Windows Media Player icons and RIGHT CLICK on it. Select PROPERTIES. Click on BROWSE. She will be able to change all the WMP files to VLC by clicking on the VLC icon that will appear in the box. All WMP files will then change to VLC.

Another question was, "How does one create a .PDF in MS Office 2003 or in Libre Office?" Install CUTE PDF on your machine and when ready to PRINT, CUTE PDF will appear in the box listing your printers. Click on CUTE PDF and the document will print out as a .PDF. The advantage of a .PDF is that anyone can read the file on any machine. A comment was made that any document in MS Office can be read in Libre Office and vice versa.

Dolores just purchased a jump drive and noticed it doesn't list Windows 10 as an operating system it will work with. Bill assured her it will work with all recent versions of Windows.

Every time Dolores boots up her Windows XP computer she gets a message that she's missing a particular .DLL. She has made a point of putting that particular .DLL on her system but it still asks for it. She was advised to first create a restore point and then run CCleaner. When CCleaner is finished she should click on FIX ALL ISSUES. To create a restore point in Windows XP, click on the START button and choose HELP AND SUPPORT. Under PICK A TASK click on SYSTEM, and select UNDO CHANGES TO YOUR COMPUTER WITH SYSTEM RESTORE. In the next box select CREATE A SYSTEM RESTORE POINT, then NEXT. A box asking the name of the

restore point will appear. Put a name for the restore point or just the date, and click on CREATE.

Richard runs AVAST and gets the message “Can’t check some files because they are password protected.” They are old files he received from someone and doesn’t know the password. He was advised to copy them to a jump drive or a CD in case they’re needed, then just delete them from his computer.

## Tutorial SIG: Working on CDOM

There were nine of us at the Tutorial SIG October 8. Those included Lucille Stahl, Tom Hermann, Marilyn Evaska, Richard Durand, Bill Gierich, Bob and Terry Harvey, Phil Walker, and we welcomed new member Tom Martini.

Marilyn had some questions about Linux she was asking for a friend. Bill was unable to answer her question as he needed more information regarding the friend’s computer. Bill did give Marilyn some basic information about the operating system.

To find the version of Firefox, go to HELP, ABOUT FIREFOX, and the screen that comes up will show the version.

The question was asked if there was a way a to stop pop-ups? In Firefox, go to TOOLS, ADD-ONS, on the screen that comes up, look to the right and scroll down to BROWSE ALL ADD-ONS, and ADD-BLOCK PLUS is a program that will stop them.

As there were no other questions, it was suggested we look at October’s CDOM. We looked at a few of the programs until Tom M. asked a question about anti-virus programs. Bill prefers Avast as do a number of us in the group. It’s free and its interface is easy to use. He showed us how to update our preferences by going to SETTINGS and reminded us to make sure the radio button by GET AUTOMATIC UPDATES is highlighted. Richard said when he is working on his computer, but not on the Internet, he will disconnect his computer from the Internet so he’s not vulnerable to any hackers that may be lurking online.

To set a new RESTORE POINT, open SYSTEM PROPERTIES, click on the SYSTEM PROPERTIES tab, click on the SYSTEM RESTORE box, and follow the NEXT boxes. Bill recommends creating a new

system restore point before installing any new programs and after deleting any programs<sup>32</sup>.

## Tablet SIG: iPads, Androids Split

We had a crowded room at Clement Manor on September 24th, 2015, for the Tablet SIG. There were ten iPad people and ten Android people. Some in the Android group were visitors. Elizabeth (Liz) Skiba and Judy Desjardin were warmly welcomed. Marcia brought a lovely homemade fapple cake

Marcia Zientek asked Tom Livermore, the Android Grand Pupa, to teach her how to move some of her apps off of her Android system to her SD card as there is an upgrade to Lollipop that her cell phone company is reminding her of. Lollipop is an Android operating system. In your apps, press on SETTINGS, APP MANAGER, and CHOOSE THE APP you would like move on to the SD. Scroll down a bit to where it says, “MOVE TO SD CARD and press on that action.

Marcia uses her Google Calendar and is quite a promoter of it. She was willing to teach us how to use our calendar. The advantage of using this program is it doesn’t matter if you are a Mac user or a PC user. You can use it on your computer at home and it will sync with your smartphone or tablet. This is a very nice feature. She taught us to go to GMAIL, look under the MORE tab for CALENDAR and to press on a date. Press or type on a date on the calendar and start making your appointment. She decided to enter into the calendar the General Meeting, which is always on the first Thursday of the month at 7PM until 9PM. In the location box she recommends using the Google microphone by pressing on it. Then, you can say your location such as JACKSON PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH. The church’s website should appear and if you press on the hyperlink, the address of the church will appear in the location box.

There was a lot of interest in this feature. One thing in general to remember is to use the microphone just to the left of your spacebar. Press it and it will direct you to speak. Speak slowly and clearly and you will save yourself a lot of hunting and pecking. I use the voice to text feature quite a bit because it saves a lot of pecking.

Here is an example of how you might talk to it. “Hi comma Marcia period It’s nice to see you at the the tablet SIG period Thank you for bringing the lovely applecake period I hope you had a wonderful birthday today period” You can also send text messages using this feature. Just be SURE to use the

## How to deal with Tech Support

By Melanie Birnbom, Webmaster, Century Village Computer Club, Florida  
March, 2015 - Mid-Month Newsletter  
<http://cvccpp.tripod.com/>  
mbirnbom (at) hotmail.com

Outsourcing customer service and tech support to other countries is a fact of life these days. While most of these reps speak pretty good English, (for some it's their first language) it's not necessarily the version of English you are used to speaking. Even within your own country, understanding accents from region-to-region can be a challenge. When you're chatting with a fellow in an Indian call center, it can sound to both of you like you are not even speaking the same language. Here are some tips to make the best of the situation.

Number one - and this applies to all situations in life - please be polite. The person on the other end of the line is probably doing their best. I realize that by the time you call for support, you are probably pretty darned frustrated. That's not the fault of the person on the other end of the line.

Try not to use slang. Often times slang just doesn't translate between countries. Years ago, my husband was trying to connect a router and he told the tech support guy that it was "jacked up." The rep thought there was something wrong with a jack and kept saying that the router didn't have a jack.

Do your best to speak slowly and clearly. To the person on the other end of the line, you're the person with the accent. It's not a bad idea to write out a description of the problem to get your thoughts together before you call. Sometimes we tend to get into giving long narratives about the circumstances leading up to the problem instead of getting to the issue at hand.

Actually, all of these tips would work well for dealing with customer support anywhere. You may have read a FB post or seen an e-mail that claims, "Come to find out that every American company using overseas operators must transfer you to an American rep by saying "I want to speak to a representative in America." (Don't take no for an answer on this.) This was confirmed by the American rep that they must transfer you after that request. I've tried it on a half a dozen major companies including cable, bank, phone and mortgage companies. It works every time and I actually get my issues taken care of.

If accents are proving to be a barrier, you might consider switching to e-mail or chat communication to resolve the problem.

You might be tempted to offer an opinion on the outsourcing of jobs to other countries to the person on the other end of the line. But that's not anything a tech support rep in a cubicle has control over and you'll do better if you concentrate on the tech issue at hand. Also, once a tech support rep realizes you're acting like a jerk, they probably aren't going to want to help you. That's just human nature.

Stay calm. Stay polite. Stay on topic.

You may find more of your calls being answered here in the U.S. While the trend has been to send tech support and call center jobs overseas for many years, more and more of those jobs are actually coming back to the United States. However, the catch is that companies are using their tech support reps in the States for what they consider their high-value customers, while still routing what they consider unprofitable customers overseas. Interestingly enough, many of these U.S. call centers are managed by Indian companies.

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## Cloud Computing-An Ephemeral Concept

By Phil Sorrentino, Member of The Computer Club, Florida  
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Cloud computing has been around for quite some time. It just wasn't called Cloud computing until recently. Although, the term "Cloud Computing" is relatively new, references to "Cloud Computing" can be found as early as the mid-90s. But the term seems to have become popularized sometime in the mid-2000s. In 2008, Steve Jobs of Apple fame,

developed his vision of the cloud as a "digital hub for all your digital content". His idea was that a person's digital content (pictures, documents, videos, music) would be stored on a remote server, managed by a trusted company, making that content available for that person to use on any device, anywhere, anytime. The "cloud" is really just a metaphor for the Internet. It goes back to the days when engineers made presentations that referred to the internet, they pictured the large amorphous infrastructure of the Internet as a puffy, white cloud. This cloud would accept requests for data and provide information and answers. If you are wondering if you ever use Cloud Computing, think about this. If you have ever searched for a gift on-line, ordered it from Amazon, and tracked its progress using the supplied tracking information, you were doing Cloud Computing. You

were using applications hosted on someone else's server to accomplish your task.

In the simplest terms, cloud computing just means storing and accessing data and programs over the Internet instead of using only your computer's hard drive or local storage. When you run programs from your local hard drive and store the data on your local hard drive you are doing local computing. Everything you need is physically close by. Local computing is how we have functioned for many years and it has some obvious benefits, like speed, but cloud computing expands your computing reach beyond your local resources.

So, if the cloud is really the internet, let's look at a brief history of the internet. The internet had its beginnings in the development the ARPANet network that was funded, in the late 1960s, by an agency of the Department of Defense, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. DARPA is responsible for the development of new technologies for use by the military, but in this case non-military commerce has greatly benefited. Some brief technical considerations shows that the internet has no real structure, there are no plans or schematics that define the internet, only the implementation of packet switching and an agreed-upon set of communications protocols, called TCP/IP. Packet switching is a digital networking communications method that groups all data messages, regardless of content, type, or structure, into uniformly sized packages or packets. TCP/IP provides the protocols that specify how data should be formatted, addressed, transmitted, routed and received at the destination. Packet switching and the use of TCP/IP is what makes the internet so amorphous and yet extremely resilient. Amorphous in that you do not know what path a packet will take to get to its destination, and resilient in that if part of the network is unusable, the packets will go via alternate routes. A complete message will consist of from one to many packets. A complete message can be reconstructed when all the packets are received because the packets include the address of the intended receiver, the address of the sender, the body of information, and a set of check characters used to prove the correctness of the received data.

So because the cloud is really the internet, we all have been doing cloud computing for quite some time and we didn't even know it. Google searches, email, Netflix movie streaming, Carbonite backup, Pandora music, YouTube videos, Facebook sharing, Twitter tweeting, and Google Earth mapping, are all examples of cloud computing. Once the internet was established as a communications pathway to anyone who could

operate a personal computer, commerce began to take advantage of its reach. Think about the reach of the highway system in the 60s and 70s. The highway system brought people and commerce together. Shopping malls were easy to get to and they became the place to purchase goods. Now with the internet, people can visit (cyber) stores without even having to use the transportation highways (though the products do have to be delivered and that must be done over the highways). Commercial establishments have built large websites to accommodate the large number of people attempting to use the internet for these commercial activities. Some websites were set up just to search out information that was available from other websites. Does Google come to mind? Other websites were developed to provide the communications capability that has become email. What would we do without email? Still others like Facebook and Twitter provide a forum for social interactions. Many websites were developed to provide the news that would normally be sent to people by the newspapers, and so news websites and news readers became available. Financial institutions realized that they could interact with their customers via the internet and so they created financial websites. Financial websites give the user instant access to their financial information and allow them to buy and sell financial instruments from their home computer. I'm sure you could come up with many more types of internet websites. The last time I looked, there were over 800 million websites connected to the internet. That's a pretty big cloud.

The point of all this is that websites are hosted on computers.

Website computers provide the Server portion of the Client –Server operation. (Your browser provides the "Client" side.) Large websites are not hosted by a single computer. Large websites may employ a network of hundreds of computers. So the bigger the website, the more computers are needed to host that website. The need for these networks of computer servers has evolved into website companies building large "Server Farms". These server farms may have hundreds, if not thousands, of computers networked to act as website servers. Many of the companies with large server farms have set aside a portion, of their cloud, for use by the public. Typically, the first small amount of storage (3 – 7 GB) is free, with larger amounts at a cost. Think, iCloud, OneDrive, Google Drive, and Dropbox.

**Which of these topics are of interest to you? They are available from APCUG, and we may be able to fit your choice into the next issue. Email with your interest to [ricejulia@hotmail.com](mailto:ricejulia@hotmail.com).**

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- Edge – Microsoft’s New Web Browser, Sandy Berger
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# First Class

