

TECHNICAL GEEKERY TIPS

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Microsoft Word

I am definitely not trying to advertise anything for Microsoft in this article, especially since I don't like Office 2007 myself. However, there is a very good addition to the grammar check in this version. It is capable of spotting things that it thinks should be said some other way but are correct, such as words that are spelled correctly but don't make sense in the context. If it finds such a sentence, it gets a blue underline.

This tip was drawn to my attention by Jennifer Bjornstad, one of my longtime readers.

Internet Explorer Version 7

If you don't have a good mouse, or are bad at moving it precisely, this tip may be useful to you. You can get the buttons on the toolbar to expand and give you a larger target with only a very small waste of space on the area that displays the website. Right-click on a blank part of the toolbar (to the right of where the tabs are is a good place) and choose Use Large Icons.

Firefox

Have you ever been to a website that seems to have the teeniest text ever? Yeah, me too. It used to drive me crazy, until I discovered that there's a really easy way to zoom on a webpage. Simply press the key combination Ctrl++ to zoom in. You can repeat this as many times as necessary to make the text readable. If you really don't like the keyboard or have your hand on the mouse and are willing to move it a long way, you can also choose View>Text Size>Increase. To return to normal size, push Ctrl-0.

Note: Because of the way web pages are encoded, this trick cannot zoom on pictures.

Windows

Vista Report

Have you ever seen the fancy "Copying" dialog box for Vista? It looks sort of neat, but it doesn't show any more information than XP's. (See Screenshot 1.)

But wait a second—did you notice the little "More Information" button in the corner? If you click this, you get all sorts of useful information, such as being able to see the from and to folders without them being cut off, the copy speed in megabytes per second, and the number of items remaining and their size. See below for the expanded version.



General Internet

I always hate advertising for other companies. Even more, I hate making it seem like I think my ideas are always the best ever. But even so, I will go on with this article.

I have recently created a forum that allows people to post minor problems with their computers that don't require immediate action. This has three advantages: one, it allows anyone to attempt to help you (and many people have a better chance of answering than just one); two, it is simple to use; and three, you don't have to deal with calling somebody on the phone who knows much more than you but thinks you are a total idiot.

Unfortunately, nobody seems to be using it (at least as of this writing). So next time you have a small problem with your computer, I would greatly encourage you to log on to my website, www.thetechnicalgeekery.com, click the Forums link, and post your problem. To get an account (which shows you what articles are new and allows you to post), click the Register link at the top of the page. The signup takes about a minute, unless you actually try to fill in all the blanks.

How the Newsletter was Made:

You can't possibly miss all the screenshots that have shown up in this newsletter over the months (years?) that you've read it. But how do you even create one?

Well, of course, you could resort to pulling out your digital camera or cell phone and snapping a picture of your monitor. (By the way, this is a good way to record settings for your computer's 'setup' program if you have to change anything, seeing as it isn't running Windows at that point.) However, this is clunky, slow, and obviously couldn't be used to take large numbers of screenshots.

The old, brute-force method is to simply hit the Print Screen key on your keyboard, often labeled PrtScr, PrintScr, PrtScreen, or even Prt Scr. (And no, it *won't* send anything to your printer.) This is the equivalent of copying a picture to your Clipboard. You can then paste it into Paint, Microsoft Word, or another graphics-capable program.

However, the more elegant solution is to download and install a screenshot program. There are plenty of good free programs, but there are

also some very capable but expensive ones out there. I use a free one called MWSnap, which you can download at: <http://www.mirekw.com/winfreeware/mwsnap.html>.

See Screenshot 2 to see what the program looks like. And no, I didn't take this screenshot with MWSnap. (Infinite loop started...)

Announcements

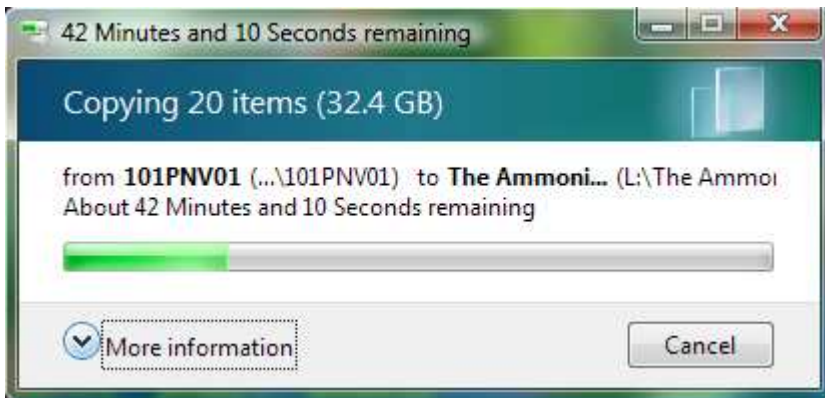
Report difficulties, technical problems, and/or factual problems with this newsletter to soren.bjornstad@gmail.com.

Do you have any friends who you think would like this newsletter? Have them send me an email and ask to be added to my mailing list. If you wish to unsubscribe, you can click the link in the email.

We have a new prize this month. Somewhere in here, two pictures, 'columns', or something else like that don't quite match up. If you notice the discrepancy, send me an email and you will be mentioned in the next newsletter as being good at spotting small differences.

Screenshots

Screenshot 1



Screenshot 2

