



**Arizona Society for
Computer Information, inc.**

**The
ASCI**



Clipboard

Volume 9 Issue 10

<http://www.asciigroup.org>

October 2002

General Meeting

Presentations

TechSmith will demonstrate SnagIt, a screen capture program.

SAM will go over the basics of website and website graphics.

- Basic Questions and Answers
- Announcements
- Club Business
- Site Seekers: Kathy Deaton
- Buy, Sell, or Trade
- Prize Drawing

Bring your friends and neighbors!

Upcoming Presentations

- November: Cox High Speed Internet
- December: Holiday Party
- January: Ulead



President's Message

Bang!

Bang! The bus stopped immediately. From the back, "It's a tire," someone said. From the front, "It doesn't smell like a tire," I responded. The odor of burnt powder was unmistakable. The driver went to the back as a passenger walked forward holding his ear. His ear hurt. Could he get off? The driver went back up front to release the back door. The passenger stepped out and walked away.

The driver looked around and found the shell casing. "You have a phone? Call 911," I told him. He went to get his phone, and came back asking, "Did anyone get a good description?" I said, "Get your call started now." So he called.

An officer arrived and started questioning him. "Where did you pick up that passenger?" The driver gave a location west of us. The bus was headed east but the officer asked, "Were you westbound?" More officers came, and another one asked the same question, "Were you westbound?"

What happens in a stressful situation? The bus driver became involved in details instead of sensing the urgency to notify the police. The policeman asked if the bus was westbound when it was obviously going east. Somehow, logic sometimes escapes us when something goes wrong.

Some passengers found the bullet entry hole and exit hole in a bus seat. Was the discharge accidental? Why did the man have a gun on the bus? There are "No Weapons" signs.

The next bus approached. A bus company supervisor stepped off the curb to motion the driver to a stop. We weren't at a bus stop and he didn't appear to be slowing down. The supervisor stepped out farther into the street and waved both hands above her head to get his attention. He pulled over.

"When you see a bus stopped like this and police lights flashing, you need to stop," she told him. "These people will be riding free."

Are there any procedures for dealing with emergencies? Was either driver trained in responding to the situation? What would you do in similar circumstances?

What do you do when your computer stops working correctly? Do you think logically about the problem? Do you panic or do you ask for help before your clues vanish?

If your system crashes and the registry is shot, you might need to restore

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ASCiI

Arizona Society for Computer Information, inc. is a non-profit computer user group that formed well over 14 years ago.

ASCiI is just computer people helping computer people by sharing information and talents.

ASCiI has a general meeting on the second Saturday of the month in the ABACUS building at 3rd Street and Earll Dr.

ASCiI also has an Eastside meeting on the fourth Saturday of the month at Exceptional Realty, 4645 S. Lakeshore Dr., Suite 1, Tempe, AZ. This meeting consists of the Steering Committee followed by an open forum.

- The **Steering Committee** meets at 1:00 P.M. and lasts about 1 hour. All members are encouraged to attend and contribute their ideas for the future of YOUR user group.
- Hardware and software problems are welcome at the **open forum**.

New users are welcome, and membership in **ASCiI** is NOT required to attend the meetings.

More information may be obtained by visiting the **ASCiI** website at www.asciigroup.org, contacting one of the **ASCiI** officers, or by writing to:

Arizona Society for Computer Information, inc.

4397 W. Bethany Home Rd., PMB 1296

Glendale, AZ 85301



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the most recent good copy. Stop and think. Your system probably saves a few copies of the registry. If you keep trying to restart, your good backup could be replaced by useless copies. If you don't know how to deal with the situation, seek assistance.

If a program used to work, and now it malfunctions, what happened just before it failed? Did you install something else? Did you uninstall something? Did you specify to delete shared files?

There are usually clues that help us figure out what happened. There could be a log file. Maybe it has a maximum size. If you keep running, the needed information could roll off the end.

What else is running in the background? Do you always have that much going on? Does the system work when you run only the program giving you problems?

Do you have a good anti-virus program running? Do you keep the definitions up to date? Have you received attachments from someone you don't know? Have you visited suspicious web sites?

If you think you have a computer infection, you could be damaging your system more by continuing to run. And you could be infecting countless other systems by spreading the infection. If you need to download anti-virus updates, be sure to use a clean system to avoid contaminating them. And since infections can live in memory, remember to shut down and turn off your system completely, before restarting and updating your anti-virus software.

Are you running a firewall? Do you let it alert you when programs try to access the internet? The firewall should monitor both incoming and outgoing traffic. Did you disable the firewall for some reason and forget to enable it again?

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Have you checked your system for spyware and adware? Do you participate in file-sharing programs? Do you run any server software? Do you allow other people to remotely control your computer? Do you share your computer with other people?

Are you running the same hardware? Are all of the cables plugged in securely? Have you checked the device manager for problems? Are your drivers up to date?

Is free disk space filling up? Do you have lots of old work files? Do you need to clean up your temporary internet files? Do you run regular maintenance like scandisk and defrag?

There are so many factors to consider when your computer malfunctions. Maybe it is comforting to consider they are common sense to someone. If it isn't logical for you, don't panic. With a little pondering, you might think of the clue on your own. But if you need help, report your problem while it's fresh in your mind. And help the support people remember which way you are headed.

Submitted by: **Hank Pearson,**
ASCII President



Change of Address?

Or any other change we should know about? E-mail address change?

Let Lee Laughner, our Membership Chairperson, know. She can be reached at the main meeting, or by e-mail:

laughnel@bigfoot.com

or by phone (her number is on the telephone & email list available at the main meetings).



ABIT AT7 Motherboard

Recently, I upgraded my main system to Windows XP Pro; this is worth a story all by itself. However, I'm going to talk about another change that helped the change to XP.

My old install of Windows 98 had been getting to be unstable, mostly from a Registry that was out of control. Since I install and subsequently uninstall a lot of software and hardware, and the uninstall routines often don't uninstall everything, the Registry becomes 'clogged' with old references to parts of the software and drivers for the hardware that I no longer have installed. This makes the system slow to start, and can lead to problems with software and hardware that is installed.

The installation of Windows XP didn't work right from the start. I tried doing a straight upgrade over my Windows 98, knowing this wasn't the best option, but I wanted to see how it would go. It went badly. Since I had all of my data backed up, I went ahead with a clean install. I formatted my C: drive and installed XP. I then installed my software and data. I was having various problems with accessing my C: drive, which was a set of 30 gig drives set up as a single 60 gig RAID 0 set. When I instead used a single 40 gig drive as C:, the problems went away. This led me to look on the motherboard's site to make sure I had the latest drivers; I did. A short period of time spent in the ABIT newsgroup told me that sometimes the RAID controller on my motherboard (an ABIT KT7-RAID) and XP don't get along. It looked like time for a new motherboard.

The KT7-R motherboard is, in computer terms, three generations old. The latest drivers and BIOS upgrade only go up to 1.4 GHz for the AMD processors. I had a 1.3 GHz chip onboard.

The replacement is an ABIT AT7, which accepts AMD processors (there's also an IT7 version, which accepts Intel processors). The AT7 is the first in what ABIT calls its MAX series; these will be what is called "legacy free" motherboards. This means that they will not have many of the I/O ports that we have seen for a long time. This motherboard has no Serial, Parallel, or PS/2 ports, as well as no ISA slots. These ports and slots are slow and their drivers can interfere with each other and the rest of the board. Along with the ISA slots, they represent older technology that has been bypassed by USB 1.1 and USB 2.0, as well as IEEE1394 (Firewire). This means that you may need to buy a new mouse and keyboard if you use one of these motherboards.

If you have a serial or parallel device, like a graphics tablet or scanner or printer, this motherboard will need a PCI I/O card. But that defeats the purpose of the legacy-free board. There are many other motherboards that have serial and parallel I/O.

The AT7 has a lot of I/O ports without adding any more cards; it has: four USB 1.1 ports (with a header for two more), two USB 2.0 ports (with headers for two more), two Firewire ports, a 10/100 NIC (Network Interface Card) port, a 5 channel sound interface (mic in, line in, front R+L, Rear R+L, and subwoofer), one S/PDIF out port (digital audio), two standard UDMA 133 (for four IDE devices), and four RAID channel UDMA 133 (for up to eight RAID drives, or separate IDE drives). That's a lot of I/O, and should keep most people well-connected. There's an 8X AGP slot, and three PCI slots, as well as one CD sound connector and one AUX sound connector. The three PCI slots may seem like too few, but most people would only want to fill one of them for a better sound card. The others are

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still free for anything that comes up.

Four DIMM slots support PC 1600, PC 2100, and PC 2700 DDR SDRAM modules. I have two 512 meg PC 2100 modules in mine. I put an Athlon 2000+ processor in it.

Windows XP went in just as smooth as, uh, silk. The included CD of drivers for the on-board I/O and the floppy for the RAID drivers worked flawlessly. XP recognizes the RAID sets I have with no problem at all. All of the other I/O that I've used work just like they are supposed to.

The actual board installation into the case went very easy. I've done this enough to have a routine; I install the processor/cooler and RAM, then make sure the stand-offs are in the right place, then install the I/O shield (the piece the I/O ports fit into), then install the motherboard and screw it down. Connecting all of the cables and power supply is all that's left to do.

The new motherboard and CPU work very well with XP; the lack of legacy I/O means that the system isn't slowed down with them, but I did need to buy a new USB keyboard. Being able to plug in my USB devices without needing to shut the system off is a big plus over serial and parallel devices, too. The AT7's integrated I/O and sound work fine and all the drivers are in one place: the CD that came with it. I'll know where they all are anytime I may need them, which I probably won't.

With a capability to hold up to 4 CD or DVD drives on the standard UDMA connectors (which will also, of course, handle hard drives), and up to 8 more hard drives on the 4 RAID connectors, means there's a lot of space and CD/DVD choices available. The RAID controller (Highpoint 374) will handle RAID 0, 1, and 0+1 sets. If you have, for example, four 100 Gig hard drives, you can have a 400 Gig RAID 0 set. Then, with four more, you can have a 400 gig RAID 0+1 set. That's a lot of hard drive space! Of course, if you decide to do some serious video work, you'll need it.

All in all, the ABIT AT7 (and IT7, for Intel CPUs) is a very capable. Legacy-free motherboard, and seems to be an excellent choice if you want to do a pretty extensive upgrade of both motherboard and Operating System. ABIT keeps the latest versions of its BIOS and drivers on it's website (<http://www.abit-usa.com/>), so keeping it up to date is easy. At this point, the suggested retail price and the street price are pretty close (about \$150).

Submitted by: **Bill Funk**

ASCII Member



Get Your 15 Minutes of Fame!

Would you like to be listed right at the top of the who's who list? Would you like your name next to the likes of Hank Pearson or Bill Funk? You may be thinking to yourself, "How can I do it?" It's easy. Just write an article about anything to do with computers. It can be about your favorite program, something fun you do with your computer, or even about something you've seen or heard someone else do with their computer. Long or short, we take it all!

Send your questions or, better yet, your articles to editor@asciigroup.org.



Google is Great

Listen to any of the technology talk shows or read articles that discuss "search engines" and you'll see that Google has been rated high for a long time. I find it accurately displays whatever I'm looking for, so much so, that it's like having an encyclopedia of knowledge at my finger tips. Newer engines are coming out, but I still trust Google to find my answers. But have you dug deeper down into what's available with this search engine? Well read on, because there's a lot more to it.

Let's start by using the basic search window found on <http://www.google.com>.

When my computer runs into a problem and can give me enough of an understandable error message, I've found that typing the message into a Google search window usually gives me enough hits to help me narrow the problem. My son called me a few months ago and said he thought he had sent me a virus, and wanted me to delete the file called `sulfnbk.exe`. It sounded a little fishy, and since he was close to his computer, I asked him to type the file name into Google. He saw the words HOAX come up in big block letters. Google saved me the hassle of trying to resurrect that file later. If you want to narrow your searches to just Microsoft-related pages, you can click on "Advanced Search" and go to the bottom of the displayed page and click on "Microsoft." Thus, if you have an operating system or Microsoft application question, this narrows the boundaries of the search. You can also get there directly by going to <http://www.google.com/microsoft.html>.

Notice from the "Advanced Search" page that other narrow searches can be done for Apple,

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BSD Unix, Linux, and Government-related sites.

Try doing a "vanity search" by typing your name in the search box. Or even try it with friends you've lost contact with. I've found some long-lost souls just by doing this. Enter a name, city, state, or zip code for a business or a person and see if you get a hit. You may be surprised at how easy it can be to find information about yourself. Enter a phone number and see if you get a name back. If Google recognizes what you entered as an address, you'll get a street map back. Google is so good at finding things that there was even a game called "googlewhacking" where people would try typing in a combination of words that just returned one search reply. It's fairly hard to do unless you use some really obscure word variations.

Looking at the basic search screen on the opening Google page, you'll notice four tabs on top. The default is the Web tab, which we were just using. The next one is the Images tab, taking you to <http://images.google.com>.

This will allow you access to millions of images on the Web. Suppose your child is doing a school report on oak trees. Type "oak trees" into the images search engine and you'll find plenty of pictures for the report. Of course, I need to pass along the disclaimer that lots of stuff on the Web is copyrighted, so you need to be careful how you use what you find. But I doubt you'll get into too much trouble using a picture in your school report. But I did hear that teachers could use Google to search for text phrases in reports to check for plagiarism.

There are thousands of newsgroups in cyberspace, covering thousands of topics, and only so much time in a day. The third tab over is the "Groups" tab and it will

Eastside Meeting

Meets at 1:00 P.M. on the fourth Saturday every month.
Part 1: Steering Committee — Part 2: Open Forum

Address

Exceptional Realty
4645 S. Lakeshore Dr., Suite 1, Tempe, AZ
For further info, call Bob @ (480) 831-0002.

Every member who attends is on the committee. Important decisions are made at these meetings. This is YOUR club. It needs YOUR input!



let you find out what is (or was) being discussed out there that you would be interested in. For example, if you're thinking of buying a new digital camera, type the model number in the Groups search window. You'll see messages from people in various newsgroups that discussed that item. You can use this method to monitor almost any topic you have an interest in.

The last tab over at the top is the "Directory" tab. Click here and you'll see Web pages organized into directories by topic, much like you'd see at Yahoo. For example, click on "Computers" and you'll see almost 50 computer topics arranged by categories, any one of which takes you to many other Websites. They advertise they have over 1.5 million pages indexed in this directory.

Want to keep up with current news stories? Go to <http://news.google.com> and enter in a news topic. Say you wanted to stay abreast of the Hayman Fire that burned close to us a few months back. Entering those words into the search window resulted in stories from newspapers all across the country. Google would even tell you how old the stories were, with many only hours old.

For the linguists out there that need help translating short pieces of text from one language to another, there's http://www.google.com/language_tools. Need help translating "yo quiero" from Spanish to English, then give it a try.

Want to see additional tools being worked on by the Google development team? Look at <http://labs.google.com>. Four tools are listed, the most interesting to me being the glossary. If you come across an unfamiliar word or phrase and go here, you'll get a link or pointer to pages that offer a definition. Another tool at this site is Google Sets, where you can type in a few related words, and it give you a list of more related items. There's also a voice recognition tool to help you search Google by phone, and a keyboard shortcuts tool that lets you search Google without a mouse.

I hope I've convinced you why Google is great, not only as a search engine for the Web, but also for its many other capabilities for specialized searches. Do you ever wonder how history would look if recorded by the types of searches being done on the Web? Then look at the year 2001 laid out at <http://www.google.com/press/timeline.html>. You can see what was on the minds of many people that year by the searches that were requested. So search wisely--historians may learn about us, while we learn about what interests us.

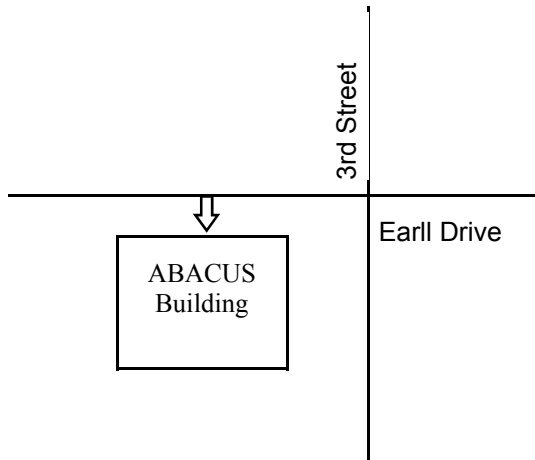
**Author: John Lenihan, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society
Provided by the APCUG Editorial Committee.**



Westside Meetings

ABACUS building
3rd Street & Earll Drive

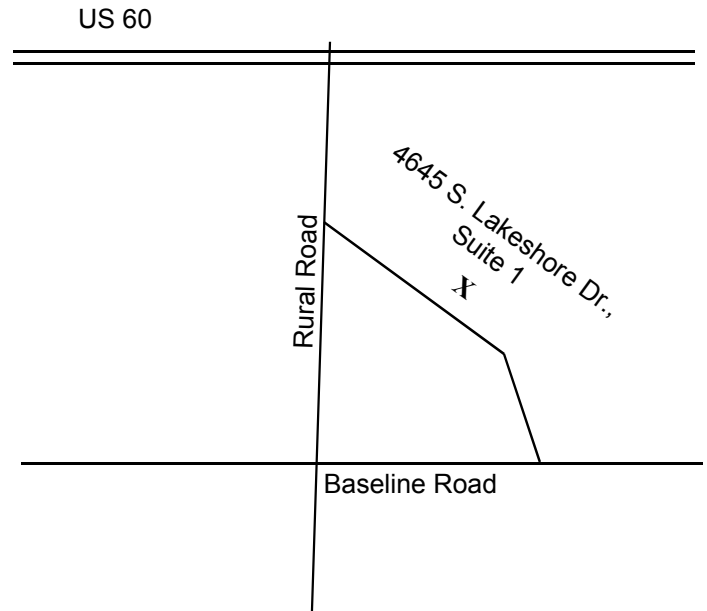
The Second Saturday of each Month
at 12:30 P.M.



Eastside Meetings

Exceptional Realty,
4645 S. Lakeshore Dr., Suite 1
Tempe, AZ

The Fourth Saturday of each Month
at 1:00 P.M.



ASCIi

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

