

Newsletter of Sydtrug Inc.

Sydney TRS-80/MS-DOS Users' Group

C/- Peter Wignell PO Box 95 NARWEE NSW 2209

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Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be held on the
SECOND Saturday of the following months @ 1pm
Regents Park Community Centre
1 Amy Street Regents Park NSW 2143

11th June
10th September
10th December

**Closing date for the Newsletter contributions
is at the monthly meetings**

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For **single membership**. \$45 per standard financial year (July to June). Or for a **family membership** (which includes all family members living at the same address \$55 per standard financial (as above). These **Fees fall due 1st July each year**. They cover the costs of the monthly newsletter, admission to Sydtrug meetings and access to the group's library.

Our newsletter "SYDTRUG News"

Distributed on a regular basis, it includes the Groups business information, membership list and contact details along with articles and information on software and hardware from local and overseas sources. Contributions are always welcome

COST: Included in your membership fee. **Printed Back Issues** (where available) are \$2.00 an issue, plus postage (70¢ in Australia). However you should first check our WebPages for available newsletters at **www.sydtrug.org**

Other Newsletters

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Unless otherwise indicated most of the "Jokes" and "Sayings" are from the WEB pages of the "TOP 100 funniest one-liners, quotes and jokes on the internet!"

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Scam I Am

by Greg Skalka, President, Under the
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April 2015 issue, Drive Light
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Scam I Am

I don't like things to slow me down
The web is made to click around
Passwords are a royal pain
There's no room for them inside my brain

My inbox may be filled with spam
But I'm not worried about a scam
Google's tracking helps me shop
My Facebook postings never stop

Hackers will not target me
There are bigger fish in the world-wide sea
My check has bounced - there's no money left
Oh no! I'm a victim of identity theft!

Scams, cons, theft and deceit have been around forever. Just as technology has helped us increase our productivity, it has helped the crooks become more efficient as well. The old scams and trickery have been made easier to execute, while new forms of theft have been developed.

The authenticity of bank robber Willie Sutton's quote about why he robbed banks, "Because that's where the money is", may be in question, but robbers today still go where there are things of value. Now their targets are subscriber personal data at Anthem Blue Cross, credit card information at Target and account information from phishing attempts on individuals through email.

With so many institutions, from banks, retailers, insurance companies, medical providers and even the government holding sensitive information about us and apparently not protecting it all that well, we are all at high risk of institutional data theft, though there is not much we can do to prevent it. For most of us, hiding out in the woods with no legal residence, credit cards or medical coverage is not an option. I have Anthem Blue Cross health insurance, so since their announcement of the loss of subscriber data through a cyber attack, all I can do is take advantage of their offer of free credit monitoring and identity theft protection, and watch my accounts and credit

reports carefully. While we can't do much about the institutional data hacks, we can do a better job of protecting ourselves from those threats that target us individually.

There is a strong correlation between crime rates and the proximity to a freeway onramp; access to a highway facilitates finding victims and provides criminals a quick and easy getaway. The connection to the Information Superhighway we get through our computers, tablets and smart phones works in the same way, bringing the potential for crime closer to us. Now financial misfortune can be as close as our inboxes or browsers.

We have all received those ridiculous emails reported to be from Nigerian customs officials, foreign attorneys and even the head of the FBI, asking for help or offering huge sums of money for us to claim. It is hard to believe anyone falls for these scams anymore, yet I still continue to receive the emails. I've also received many emails that appear to be from banks, credit card companies and online services, but are really phishing attempts. These are generated by criminals intent on tricking me into providing them with my sensitive information. A lot of them are easy to spot; they may be from institutions I don't have accounts with, or may have misspellings or other flaws that are a tip-off that they are fakes. I have received some very convincing phishing emails, however. Either by random chance or because the scammers knew I had an account there, I've received emails that appeared legitimate and pertinent to my situation, but after close examination and research, turned out to be fakes intended to scam me.

With income tax filing season in full swing, the media is presently full of warnings about email and phone scams related to the IRS. We hear about all these scams and hacks; hopefully we take these warnings seriously and don't disregard them as things that only happen to others. I'd heard about phone scams where callers try to convince you that a loved one is in trouble and you must send money to help them, but I never considered them a serious threat until someone tried to scam my mother.

A few weeks ago, my mom called our home and asked if our daughter was all right. She then told us the story of the scam call she had just received. Fortunately, she was suspicious and did not get taken. It is not clear if she was targeted specifically by scammers with knowledge of our family situation, or if it was just a random call.

When my mom answered the scam call, a young female voice said “Hi Grandma.” Since she has only one granddaughter, my mom replied “Hi Alli”, so it is not clear the caller knew my twenty-four-year-old daughter’s name beforehand.

The caller initially engaged briefly in some small talk, like how have you been and such, but then, either having some knowledge or taking a chance, asked if Grandpa was there. The scam would have been exposed at that point had my father been deceased, but fortunately he was there.

The caller then said “Grandma, I’m in trouble, but you have to promise not to tell anyone else in the family about this. Can you do that, Grandma?”

My mom was getting a little suspicious, but agreed.

The caller went on. “Grandma, a good friend of mine died suddenly and I’m in Virginia for the funeral. Because she was Jewish, they had to bury her right away, so I had to travel on short notice. After the funeral, some other friends and I stopped at a restaurant for a drink before returning to our hotels. I only had one drink, but because I was also taking antibiotics for bronchitis, I hit a street light and knocked it over on the way back.”

The addition of bronchitis to the scam narrative is interesting as it generates sympathy for the caller (she is not just a drunk) and could explain why she perhaps did not sound quite like my daughter. This scam would understandably work best on grandparents that don’t often get calls from their granddaughters. I’m certain my wife and I would have been able to recognize our daughter’s voice had we been called.

The caller continued. “Grandma, I’m at the police station here. They said they would not charge me with anything if I could pay for the damaged street light, but I don’t have the money. A lawyer here is willing to pay for it on my behalf if you can send him the money. Here is a policeman.”

A male voice came on the line. “Hello, this is Officer Raleigh. Your granddaughter needs you to send \$2300 to cover the damage to the street light, and then we can release her with no charges. Can you do that?” Officer Raleigh then provided detailed instructions to my mom on sending the money. She was to take \$2300

in cash, with two IDs, to a Walmart and send it via Western Union MoneyGram to Ronald Pearlman in Bristol, Virginia. When Officer Raleigh asked if she understood all of this, my mom replied that she didn’t think all this sounded right.

Officer Raleigh put the phone down for a minute, as if he was not sure what to say. When he came back to the call, he began repeating the payment instructions again. When my mom again said she didn’t think this sounded right, Officer Raleigh hung up. The scam was thwarted.

I told my mom’s story to a co-worker a few days later and she said a similar thing had happened to her relatives in Mexico, except that it was kidnappers calling to say they had their daughter. Her relatives unfortunately paid \$1500 before finding out their daughter had been safe at a friend’s house all along.

With all our personal information entrusted to companies and the Internet, hackers and crooks can have a much easier job deceiving us. To avoid being taken advantage of by these thieves, we all must unfortunately be more suspicious and skeptical. Just because you’re paranoid doesn’t mean they are not out to scam you.

BACK TO BASICS

Using the Internet

By Jim Cerny, 2nd Vice President,
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December 2014 issue, Sarasota
Technology Monitor

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The Internet is an almost unlimited source of information, news, entertainment, help, and, well everything. Most people, including you, probably have no problem using the Internet, but sometimes it is good to review some Internet-related terms and some basics. It helps us use the internet even better. Here are some Internet terms --

The INTERNET – a whole lot of computers sharing information. There is only one Internet, it does not come in parts. It is also called the World Wide Web. Anyone can put anything on the internet, it is not “policed” by anyone. Be careful what you see or read may not be true.

You can connect to the internet using a wire to your computer or, more common today, without a wire, called a “wireless” connection or “Wi-Fi”. All laptop computers and iPads and “smart phones” have the ability to connect to a wireless network IF one is available in the range of your computer. Hotels, restaurants, libraries, and some towns may provide free wireless connections for you. Desktop computers usually connect with a wire but you can purchase a device to make your desktop connect without a wire.

Internet PROVIDER – a company to whom you pay money to allow you access to the Internet. Companies like Verizon, Comcast, Brighthouse, or a satellite “dish” company are examples.

Internet BROWSER – a program on your computer which allows you to view internet web pages. These programs, such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, are all free. The Internet Explorer program comes free with Windows but you can download others from the Internet if you wish. All these programs work the same way but may look a little different.

INTERNET ADDRESS – every web page on the internet has a unique address.

ADDRESS BAR – located at or near the very top of your Internet Browser program window, this “box” contains the address of the web page you are currently viewing in the window. You can go to another web page address by left-clicking your mouse on the current address (which will highlight the address) and entering, using your keyboard, any new valid web page address. (If you enter words or text in this box instead of an address, your web browser will search the Internet using a search engine. That’s ok, but it may not be the search engine you want to use).

WEB PAGE – a “document” on the internet which has a unique address. You may also think of a web page as a specific “location” on the Internet. A web page can be any length or size. Look for scrollbars at the side of the window or the bottom to use to see the entire page.

HOT LINK – Almost all web pages contain “hot links” to click on with your mouse. These links will take you to another web page.

SEARCH ENGINE – a web page that you can use to search the Internet. The most popular is Google (www.google.com) but there are many

others such as Ask.com, Bing, and Yahoo. They are free to use, just go to their webpage.

Now that we have reviewed some terms, we will look at the two ways to use the internet. The first way, if you know the exact web address of the web page you want to see, just enter that address in the address bar or box and hit the “Enter” key on your keyboard. Your Internet browser will go to that web page and the new address will be displayed in the address bar.

The second way to use the Internet is when you do not know an address and just want to search the internet for something. So, you use a search engine like Google. At the Google web page you will see your insertion point waiting for you to enter your search words in the search box. Use regular English words separated by spaces. You can even ask a question. Google will search the whole internet in a fraction of a second and give you thousands of results, usually ten or fifteen on a page. On the results, you can click on any web page title to go to that web page.

Here are some very helpful things to consider when using the internet. You can find out more about them by using Google.

FAVORITES – If you like visiting certain web pages often, keep it in your “favorites” list. The next time you want to visit that web page again, just click on “favorites” and click on the one you want in the list. You can organize your favorites into **FOLDERS** too. So you could have a folder of your favorite medical web pages or games or whatever.

The Left and Right **ARROWS** at the top of the window of your web browser program can be clicked (with your left mouse button) to go back to a previous web page or to go forward to see a web page you have already seen. When you use your web browser you are building a chain of web pages that you have visited and these arrows allow you to move up or down that chain.

OPTIONS – Your web browser program will come with many options some of which you may want to understand and use. For example, do you want to keep in memory your history of web pages visited? You should use the “help” option on your browser program (mine is a small blue circle with a white “?” in it) to learn what you can do. You will not want to try everything, but you will find some things you will want to try.

TABS – Most browsers are able to use “tabs” which are, simply, a web page that is kept

active. Years ago you could only view one web page at a time. But by using tabs, you can set up your browser to have several web pages available to you at once (without opening another web browser program window). I don't use tabs very much, but sometimes when you click on a hotlink it may open the next web page in a new tab.

GOOGLE HELP – Remember, you can ask Google any question you want. If you want to know something about your browser program, you could enter in Google something like: "How do I save favourite web pages in Internet Explorer?" Be as specific as you can with your question.

Hopefully this has been a good review for you and maybe will inspire you to try something new with your browser program.

Favourite Smartphone and Tablet Features

By Julie Mahaffey, Member, ICON Computer Users Group, MO

Teacher: Beginning iPhone / Favourite Devices (Android & iPhone/iPad) classes, Mercy Seniors Service

January 2016 issue, The ICON Newsletter

<http://www.iconusersgroup.org/newsletters> (at) iconusersgroup.org

I recently asked my smartphone and tablet-using friends what their favourite features are for their devices. Following is what they shared.

1. Navigation

- Smartphone is always with you.
- Smartphones use maps stored on remote servers so the maps are always current.
- Integration with contacts on your smartphone for entering destination.
- Works for driving and walking tours.
- Useful in town as well as on trips.

2. Calendar

- Calendar view can be set up as a list, year view, month view, or day view.
- Can be synced with all devices.
- Settings allow inclusion of holidays and birthdays from contacts.

3. Alarm

The clock on a smartphone can be used as an alarm, timer, stopwatch, or world clock.

4. Weather Channel App

Provides current temps, local forecasts, radar maps, storm tracking, and alerts.

5. Microphone for Speaking Text

- With dictation you can use your voice instead of typing text when sending email or text messages. Look for the microphone on the keyboard.
- Dictation understands basic text-related commands such as "all caps," "new paragraph," and "new line." When you say "period," "comma," "question mark," or "exclamation point," Dictation adds that punctuation.

Insert emoticons into a text field by saying "smiley face" or "frowny face."

6. Lists

- iPhones come with the Reminders App. With this app you can make grocery lists, packing lists, and set the app to remind you of a task on a specific day and time.
- Items can be added to the lists by Siri also.

7. Pre-selected text for 2nd caller

iPhone iOS 6 users have the "Reply With Message" function which allows a response to be sent to the caller with a pre-written text message.

8. White Pages App

Look up name, numbers, and addresses.

9. Fingerprint Touch ID

Touch ID lets you unlock your phone and make purchases with Apple Pay simply by using your fingerprint. It uses highly sophisticated algorithms to recognize and securely match your finger print. And the improved Touch ID sensor detects your fingerprint even faster than the previous generation.

10. Lock Screen Shows Current Temperature, Time, and Date

11. Increase Font Size and Screen Size

Double tap the screen to stretch the screen for easier reading.

12. Screen Shots

Pressing the Home and Sleep/Wake button to Snap a picture of your smartphone screen. Once a screenshot is captured, it will be automatically saved to your camera roll.

Please share your favorite features with me at [cejmmahaffey \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:cejmmahaffey@gmail.com). I'll create a list and publish the list in the next ICON newsletter to share with all ICON members.

Do I need a smartphone?

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club, Florida

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Many of you have already answered this question in the affirmative. But for those of you who might still be on the fence, here are a few thoughts that might help make the decision.

1. Contact information is always available. Put a phone number in your contact list and never have to put that phone number in again. Phone numbers in your phone can be synchronized with the contacts in your email software. With an Android phone, the phone numbers come directly from the contacts list in a Gmail account. The phone numbers will always be available and they will be backed up, so when you change phones (phone disaster or new phone envy), the contacts will show up on your new phone. No need to reconstruct or transfer your phone numbers. Addresses are also handled in the same way.

2. Your Calendar is always available. How many times have you been asked "Is Thursday, the 24th, at 2pm ok?" Doesn't it seem that every doctor's office visit ends with that question? Well, with your calendar available on your phone, you can easily answer the question and propose an alternative, if need be. Not only can you see your appointments on the calendar, but you can see appointments on other calendars, if you link them. You can easily see your appointments and your significant-other's appointments, so that a good decision can be made. I even have a calendar with important dates like birthdays and anniversaries linked in so I can always know when one is coming up.

3. You can get some things accomplished during what would be wasted time. How many times have you sat in a doctor's office much longer than you expected? Sometimes there's a good reason for the delay, but that doesn't help you, if you have to sit and wait, unable to accomplish the things you expected to do. Well, if you had your smartphone (which is really a small computer), you might be able to accomplish some of those things you would normally do at home. You could check your email. If you need to, you can even answer your emails, at least if the answers are relatively short. (The keyboards on most smartphones are probably only good for short answers, although some people get very proficient, using some of the special keyboard enhancer Apps.) You could catch up on the news. Newsreader Apps are very easy to use. You could check on your investments. Yahoo Finance is one App you might use. And if you have done all the investigating you want to, you can always play a game like Solitaire, Angry Birds, or 2048. Keep in mind that you could do all this while listening to music from your own music collection on your phone, or from a streaming service like Pandora or Spotify.

4. You can check or make a list of things you want to do, or to buy, or whatever. There are many Note-taking Apps that keep track of notes you create so you will not forget all those things you have to do before next weekend. Some Note-taking Apps keep the notes in the cloud, so they're accessible from any device, and some keep the notes on your phone so you don't even need to have an internet connection.

5. You can determine how to get to a location and get directions to a place of interest. The Maps App and Google Earth give you great views of places you may not be familiar with, and they can even give you turn-by-turn directions to get anywhere from your current location. With these Apps, you can find the nearest restaurant or gas station, and get directions if needed. And with "Cortana", the Microsoft Personal Assistant, you can verbally ask for these things, and sometimes receive audible answers.

6. You can take pictures when you didn't even think to bring a camera. Most smartphones have two cameras, as part of the device. A rear-facing camera for taking pictures of scenery, and a front-facing camera for use with skype or for taking "selfies". A camera might be very useful if you get into a traffic altercation. By the way, with the camera on the smartphone, you can even deposit checks into your checking

account without ever going to the bank. All it takes is the check, your smartphone, your bank's App, and a steady hand.

7. You can watch videos, or movies, if you are stuck in a place where there is just nothing to do. Most phones have enough memory to hold a few movies, considering a movie might be about 5 GB. And there is always video streaming if you have a Netflix or Hulu+ account. If you are in a Wi-Fi area you won't even have to use up any of your "data".

8. You can check the weather, but then you could always look out the window. However, you can check the weather at any location, and find out how the weather is up north where some of your friends might be. Don't you love to do this in the winter? I usually tell them I just got out of the pool.

9. Your smartphone can act as a bunch of useful tools. There are Apps that turn your smartphone into a calculator (that's not very earth-shaking), into a compass (that's a neat trick), and even into a flashlight (bet you didn't see that one coming). One neat calculator even shows a tape, and lets you go back to see what each and every entry was. One of the compasses looks just like the one you used when you were a boy or girl scout. And the flashlight is a nice thing to have when the lights go out, or you are in a dark movie theatre.

So, you might not need a smartphone, but you might find some of these things helpful. And when you look at the total list of things you can do with that small device, you just might find this reason enough for you to trade in your trusty flip phone for a new smartphone.

The Tip Corner – March 2014

Bill Sheff, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, Pennsylvania
March 2014 issue, The LVCG Journal
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Google Tips

Many of us use Google as a search engine. Others use it for mail and many other neat programs, so here are a few tips you might not know about.

Definitions

Type define followed by the word you want the definition for. For example, typing: define

mountain would display the definition of that word.

Local search

Go to Google Local and enter the area you want to search and the keyword of the place you want to find. For example, typing: shoe stores would display shoe stores in the area.

Phone number lookup

Enter the area code and the other seven numbers to display the name and address associated with that phone number.

Find weather and movies

Type "weather" or "movies" followed by a zip code or city and state to display current weather conditions or movie theatres in your area. You will get the weather for the next four days. When you type movies followed by the zip code will give you a link for show times for movies in that area.

Track airline flight and packages

Enter the airline and flight number to display the status of an airline flight and its arrival time. For example, typing United 2344 will display the flight information if available.

Google can also give a direct link to package tracking information if you enter a UPS, FedEx or USPS tracking number.

Translate

You can translate text that you type in as well as a web page. I have used this a few times to let renters in my condo know about a meeting. Use the Google Language Tools.

Pages linked to you

Type "link" followed by your URL to see what other web pages are linking to your website or blog.

Find PDF results only

Add file Type: to your search to display results that only match a certain file type. For example, if you wanted to display RTF results you would type for example "Windows short cuts" file type: RTF would show files that were in RTF. Searching for manuals? File Type: PDF would help you along.

Calculator

Use the Google Search engine as a calculator by typing a math problem in the search. For example, typing: 100 + 200 would display results as 300.

Stocks

Just type a stock symbol and get a stock quote.

OK! On to some other tips. This one comes up quite often, so here goes:

Speeding Up Your PC

We all experience times when the computer starts slowing down. Usually, the biggest culprits are the things that sneak into your computer such as spyware, adware and other computer threats that are unwittingly downloaded along with other content while online. It happens to us all.

A good place to start is to clean Your Computer's Windows Registry. Don't try and do it manually.

Use a program that is set up for that. One that many of us use is CCleaner. There is a free version and does a lot more than just the register. Errors, spyware and orphan file pointers build up over time. Some like to clean the registry daily, but I personally only use it about every other week. Go through the settings. For example, you can clean out your cookies, but before you do you can list the ones you want to keep such as cookies to special sites.

– you won't believe the difference that it makes.

CCleaner will also remove temporary files and other files that get added on and slowly clog your system. This program will also empty your Recycle Bin.

I don't know about you, but I collect programs like rocks rolling down the mountain side. It is very easy to download a program that sounds like the answer to a maiden's prayer, but after a month and you still don't use it, scrap it. Another way is to keep the install file on a separate external drive that you can then plug in to install a program you want to use, delete it after a while, but still have the install program.

Another tip. Reduce the number of icons on the windows screen. They do take up resources and can slow the machine down. Rather than just deleting them, you can segregate by type; such as audio/video, utilities, etc, and then put each category in its own folder. I don't know how much this will speed up your computer, but it certainly will clear a lot of clutter.

Defragging your hard drive is another speeder upper, however most newer machines automatically defrag on a periodic basis. But perhaps a couple of times a year go into Applications and do a defrag while you drink a cup of coffee.

Finally, Get rid of a virus

As stated above, not only viruses but Trojans, worms, and other malicious programs can also slow down a computer. Even if you uninstall a program or delete a malicious program sometimes something can remain in the registry, which can also affect the speed. Sometimes malicious software can install itself again after deletion. So:

1. Install a good registry cleaner or maintainer and run it. (CCleaner as mentioned above)
2. Install a good antivirus and perform a full scan. (Install AVG free or AVAST free and Malwarebytes)
3. Install a good fire wall.

Since the way a virus infects a computer is through subterfuge, as the virus is usually hidden in seemingly harmless files, documents or programs, it is imperative for you to remove the virus as soon as you discover that your computer is infected. If the virus is not quickly removed, it can cause incredible damage to your system. Microsoft has a tool (Microsoft Malicious Software Removal Tool) free for Windows users to remove virus threats and to disinfect the computer system.

To find some other possible software that you can use Google Virus removal, or malicious file removal and do some research.

THIS IS FROM THE LEHIGH VALLEY COMPUTER GROUP NEWSLETTER – USE IT IF YOU WANT TO....JT

The Tip Corner

By Bill Sheff nsheff@aol.com



Sort a List of Names in Microsoft Word

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Lists of names are usually entered into Word, either in First Name Last Name (Tom Smith) or Last Name, First Name (Smith, Tom) order, with each name a separate paragraph (i.e. followed by pressing the Return key when entered).

If the names are entered First Name Last Name and then sorted within Word, the list will sort based on the First Name:

Before sorting:

Tom Smith
Mary Brubaker
Joe Adams
Kara Jones
Walter Allen
Mary Ann Baker

After sorting:

Joe Adams
Kara Jones
Mary Brubaker
Mary Ann Baker
Tom Smith
Walter Allen

To accomplish this simple sort, simply *highlight the group of names*, click on the *Sort* icon within the **Paragraph** group on the Ribbon (**Figure 1**)

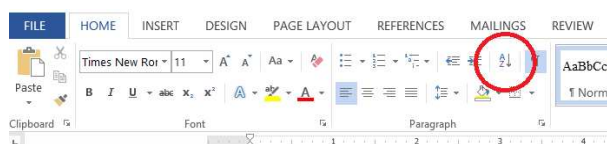


Figure 1. Sort icon in Ribbon

and set **Sort by** to *Paragraph*, **Type** to *Text*, and order *Ascending* (**Figure 2**)

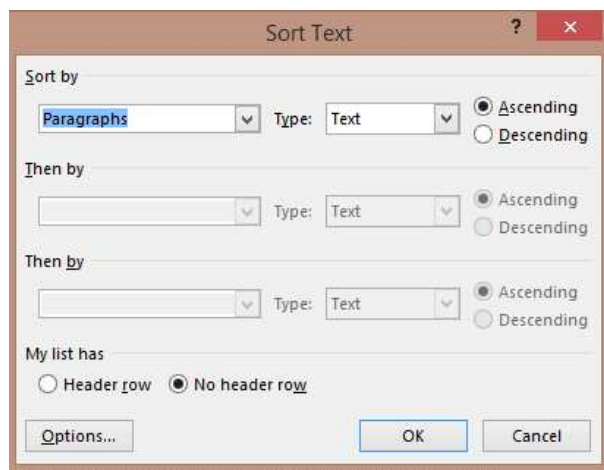


Figure 2. Sort Text Dialog Box

Frequently though, we wish to sort the list based on the Last Name instead of First Name. In this case, the names can either be entered Last Name, First Name (so we would sort as above) or they can be entered as in the first case (First Name Last Name). If the names are entered First Name Last Name, we must handle the list somewhat differently. You still will *select* the list of names and click on the *Sort* icon on the Ribbon. Now you need to click on

the *Options* button at the bottom of the dialog box (**Figure 3**).

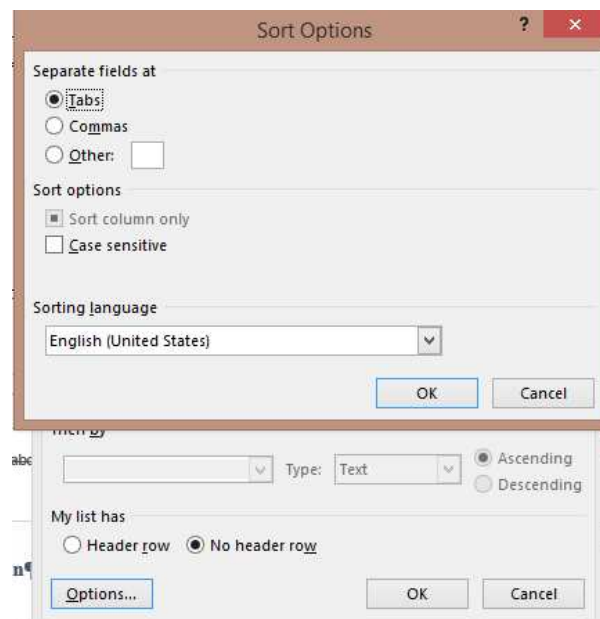


Figure 3. Sort Options Dialog Box

In the **Sort Options** box, you need to select *Other* and replace anything which may be in the following text box with a *Space* and then click *OK*. Now, in the **Sort Text** dialog box, click on the drop-down arrow under **Sort by** and select *Word 2*. (**Figure 4**) and click *OK*.

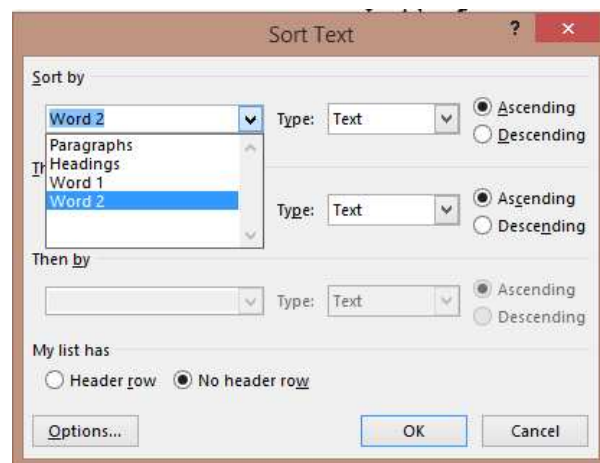


Figure 4. Sort Text Dialog Box

The following example shows the end results of sorting by Last Name. One more thing to note. We have a name that has more than two parts (Mary Ann Baker). Even though it looks like it is three words, a non-breaking space (*Ctrl+Shift+Space*) has been inserted between Mary and Ann. This makes Mary Ann appear to be one word to Microsoft Word.

Now, starting with the above list:

Tom Smith
Mary Brubaker
Joe Adams
Kara Jones

Walter Allen
Mary Ann Baker

And sorting by the last name, we get:

Joe Adams
Walter Allen
Mary Ann Baker
Mary Brubaker
Kara Jones
Tom Smith

Cybercrime and Phishing

By Kathy Frey, Member, Computer
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Summer 2015 edition Green Bytes
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At one time or another we all will be a victim of some form of Cybercrime and Phishing. The use of any preventive product is of little help if you don't practice safe computing. Help protect yourself:

1. Watch out for "**phishy**" emails. The most common form of phishing is emails pretending to be from a legitimate retailer, bank, organization, or government agency. **Delete** them. Do not open them.
2. Don't click on **links** within emails that ask for your personal information.
3. Beware of "**pharming**." This was also known as **redirect**. In this version of online ID theft, a virus or malicious program is secretly planted in your computer and hijacks your Web browser. When you type in the address of a legitimate Web site, you're taken to a fake site without realizing it. Malicious programs can be either spyware, adware or malware. Run your spyware scanning programs. Malwarebytes is a recommended program.
4. **Never** enter your personal information in a pop-up screen.
5. **Only open** email attachments if you're expecting them and know what they contain.
6. Phishing also happens by **phone**. You may get a call from someone pretending to be from a company or government agency, making various kinds of false claims and asking for

your personal information. Quite often it is about some problem with your computer. There is no way they can possibly know if you even own a computer. If you have caller ID, screen your calls, and do not answer calls from phone numbers you do not recognize.

7. If someone contacts you and says you've been a victim of fraud, **verify** the person's identity before you provide any personal information. Get a phone number and call them back. Or call who they are supposed to represent and ask if that business is making those kinds of calls.

8. **Report phishing**, whether you're a victim or not. Tell the company or agency that the phisher was impersonating.

9. Don't be embarrassed, **take action** immediately if you've been hooked by a phisher. If you provided account numbers, PINS, or passwords to a phisher, notify the companies with whom you have the accounts right away. For information about how to put a "fraud alert" on your files at the credit reporting bureaus, contact the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft Clearinghouse, www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

Most Recent Scam Alerts from the Federal Trade Commission:

[Stand up to fake debt collectors](#) - April 10, 2015
[Unlocking the code](#) - April 3, 2015
[The FTC didn't send that sweepstakes letter](#) - April 2, 2015
[Scammers play name game and get caught](#) - March 27, 2015
[An invoice today gets the doctor to pay](#) - March 26, 2015
[Reluctant to be rude?](#) - March 25, 2015
[Don't pay for a vacation to nowhere](#) - March 19, 2015
[It's the IRS calling...or is it?](#) - March 12, 2015
[Cleaning up without getting cleaned out](#) - March 6, 2015

10. When shopping online be careful and look for boxes that are pre-checked for you to receive offers from them or their partners. Be sure to **uncheck the boxes** and **opt-out** if you don't want to receive any communications. Even legitimate retailers count on you not un-checking the boxes to opt-out.

How to deal with Tech Support

By Melanie Birnbom, Webmaster,
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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 centre, 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 centre 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 centres are managed by Indian companies.

Ian Mavric collects and repairs TRS80 machines, he will provide a home to any unwanted TRS80's complete or otherwise. He is trying to stimulate interest in the TRS machines, not so much as a useful alternative to a current Win7 or MAC computer, but as collectors and restorers of old hardware for posterity.

Ian repairs, upgrades, purchases and re-sells TRS stuff... following is the address of his website to give you more of an idea of what he does.

<http://ianmav.customer.netSPACE.net.au/trs80/>