

Computer Observer

June 2007

Preferred Copy \$1.95 (FREE)

Rip, Buy, and Listen to Music the Legal Way

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

You computer can be more than a quiet workstation; it can be an enjoyable entertainment center.

Streaming music is basically a fancy way of saying online music. There are a lot of places online that you can listen to free streaming music.

Windows Media Player has some built in streaming radio functions that you can enjoy. Also, you can visit www.sky.fm and listen to a variety of music FREE including Jazz, Classical, 70s, 80s, Country, Reggae and more...

For those of you that truly enjoy your music, you can subscribe sky.fm's premium quality services for as little as \$4.95/month.

If you'd like to download music you can burn on CDs then iTunes is the program for you. With iTunes you can copy your CDs to your computer, buy songs from the iTunes store for 99cents, and you can burn CDs to listen to in your stereo and car. iTunes is free to download and free to use, you only pay for the music you want to buy.

Get iTunes at www.itunes.com

E-mail Scam's

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

Your Bank, E-Bay, Paypal, Amazon, and every other reputable company will NEVER ask you for your personal information via e-mail.

There are a lot of scammers out there that send fake e-mails pretending to be any of the above companies. The e-mails can appear very legitimate. They look like they were sent from the above company and they usually have graphics and links in them to make it appear authentic.

The most popular scams are to ask for verification of your personal information, an update of your personal information, or to ask you to simply log-in and check your account. Don't do any of these things.

Some of you may be wondering about the few instances where a legitimate company really does contact you. If you get an e-mail from a legitimate company then it usually does not have a link in it. If it does, don't click it just in case it is a scam. Instead, go to the companies official website and log-in. Don't use the link in the e-mail.

Armed with the simple rules and knowledge above you will be able to avoid the e-mail scams.

Free Books Online

By Adam J. Richter M.S.

If you read a lot, then this article will be a gold mine for you. The internet contains a plethora of news articles and other research tools that could keep you busy for hours. But now there is a new website where you can get free e-books. E-books are electronic books that you can download and read on the internet. Project Gutenberg www.gutenberg.org has a massive collection of free electronic books available. So start reading.

If you drive a lot and don't have much time behind the computer screen then you may be more interested in audio books. www.audiobooksforfree.com has a massive collection of free audio books available for download. You can simply download these books and burn them to CDs to listen to in your car. The only detriments to audiobooksforfree.com is that you have to register and the download speeds are not that fast. But if you have a little patience you can download some great books.

We Fix Computers

Computer Pros is a full service computer repair and tutoring store located in South Sarasota. Computer Pros services the following areas: North Port, Rotunda, Englewood, Venice, Osprey, Nokomis, Sarasota, Myakka City, Bradenton, Palmetto, Ellenton and more.

Call today to get your computer question answered.
Sarasota/Venice (941) 918-0300
Manatee (941) 756-5300
<http://www.computerpros.cc>

Say Goodbye to Remembering Passwords?

Download RoboForms for free. Roboform is the top-rated Password Manager and Web Form Filler that completely automates password entering and form filling.

RoboForm was named PC Magazine Editor's Choice, and CNET Download.com's Software of the Year.

No Adware. No Spyware. FREE Download
www.roboform.com

Why your Next Computer might be a Laptop By Adam J. Richter M.S.

Over the last three years, the price of laptops has decreased by over 50%. Desktops have decreased in price as well, but those decreases have bottomed out. The price of a laptop is now just a few hundred dollars above a comparable desktop.

Since the price of laptops has decreased substantially, many consumers are opting for a laptop. Although portability is not a necessity for everyone, it is a convenient luxury. Wireless hot spots are becoming more common at many locations including Panera's, McDonalds, Starbucks, and many county buildings and libraries. If you have a laptop, you can sit down at one of the wireless locations and enjoy internet on your own computer. This can be especially useful for students, study groups, business meetings, and many other things.

For those of us lucky enough to live in Florida, we have to consider hurricane season and traveling. If a hurricane comes and we have to flee to a safe location. It is a lot easier to pack up a laptop then it is to pack up a desktop. If you are someone who travels a lot, the same is true. Putting a laptop in a bag is very easy.

If you are getting a new computer soon take a look at the laptops available. Some of the better priced Windows based laptops are available from Dell and Hewlett Packard (HP). If you are a Macintosh user then take a look at the new Apple laptops. Just remember to stick to the basics of what you need and if possible go look at a display model and make sure it is comfortable. Pay careful attention to the screen size, weight, and keyboard.

Advertising

Advertising in the Computer Observer is simple.

Market: Approximately 1000 confirmed addresses

Locations: All of Sarasota and Manatee County

1/3 page is \$220/month

1/6 page is \$120/month

Contact Adam for more information
(941) 918-0300 or adam@computerpros.cc



How To Fix Your Computer

Basic Computer Cleanup by Adam J. Richter M.S.

If your computer is running slow and needs a cleanup, these are the steps you take to make it run like new again.

Step 1: Cleanup the programs running in startup

One of the most common computer problems is having too many programs running. If you press ctrl+alt+delete and look at the task manager processes, you may see a very long list of running processes. Very few of these processes are actually needed to run windows.

The startup can get congested and cause your computer to run slow.

To clean out the startup you do the following.

- Click Start>Run
- Type 'msconfig' and Click 'OK'
- Click the 'Startup' tab
- Uncheck everything except your Antivirus software
 - You can always recheck things later if you accidentally disabled something
 - None of the critical windows processes are in the 'Startup' area
- Click 'OK' and Restart your computer.

Step 2: Testing the Hard Drive performance

When hard drives start to go bad they can gradually decrease in performance until they fail. To make sure that your hard drive is not going bad you will want try either of the following programs.

Fresh Diagnose is a free program that, when registered, can be used to run a Hard Drive Diagnostic.

www.freshdevices.com/freshdiag.html

Another program that is somewhat popular in avoiding Hard Drive failures is HDD Health.

www.panterasoft.com

Both of the referenced programs are FREE.

If the hard drive checks out then you will want to check for heat. Are all of the fans on your computer working? Do you feel air blowing out of the back of the computer? If you take off the side panel on your computer is the CPU fan spinning?

You will also want to dust out the fans in your computer. You can use a can of Air Duster or a compressor; just make sure your computer is off.

Laptops are especially susceptible to heat problems. They need to be sprayed out regularly.

Step 3: Removing Spyware and Viruses

The first thing you will want to do before installing and scanning for viruses and spyware is to clean out all of your temporary files. You can use CCleaner www.ccleaner.com to accomplish this.

After cleaning out all of the temporary files you will want to scan for spyware. Get the Spy Sweeper Trial from www.computerpros.cc/software.php. After downloading and installing Spy Sweeper, run a full scan.

To remove viruses you will want to download and install AVG. AVG Free Edition can be downloaded at <http://free.grisoft.com>

Be sure to uninstall any other antivirus software you have before installing AVG. This includes McAfee, Norton, etc...

After cleaning out all of the spyware and viruses you will want to run 'Disk Defragment'

Start>All Programs>Accessories>System Tools>Disk Defragmenter

Run a full defragment on the drive.

If your computer is still running slow at this point you may have a more advanced problem. Contact a technician for help.



The Venice Area Computer Users Group

ATTENTION: NEW MEETING LOCATION AND TIME
The Next Meeting is Monday June 4th 2007 at 4:00 p.m. Venice Library

The VACUG is a non-profit organization designed to help its users become more adept in using computers. This is accomplished through classes, Q&A sessions, and through the networking of members.

Presentation meetings are held the first Monday of each month. Family, guests, and the general public are welcome. Meetings feature industry leaders such as Adobe, Corel, Microsoft, Quicken, and local experts demonstrating the latest software and hardware on the market.

One year membership is \$35.00.

Invite a guest to the next meeting FREE. Non-members may join at the meeting or may print and bring an application from www.thevacug.com

Meeting Schedule

- 4:00-4:45 PM.....Sign-in
- 4:00-4:45 PM.....Forum
- 4:45-5:00 PM.....Break
- 5:00-6:00 PM.....Guest Lecture
 Computer Pros
- 6:00-6:15 PM.....Prizes and Raffles

Meeting Location

Venice Public Library (in the auditorium)
 300 Nokomis Ave S
 Venice, FL 34285



COMPUTERPros
 8392 S. Tamiami Trail
 Sarasota, FL 34238

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 MANASOTA, FL
 PERMIT NO. 239