

# Computer Observer

May 2008

Preferred Copy \$1.95 (FREE)

## Type Wireless

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

Should you be using a wireless keyboard and mouse?

I've used quite a few different wireless keyboard and mouse combinations and I have a few tips to give you before you go out and buy a new set.

- 1) **Don't buy the cheap brands.** Stick with Logitech or Microsoft. I've tried some of the cheaper models and they were horrible. There may be some good quality cheap models out there but I haven't found one.
- 2) **Buy the bundles.** Don't buy the wireless keyboard and mouse separate. Buy the combo sets that come with the keyboard and mouse. When buying the devices separate you are more likely to encounter incompatibility issues and conflicts.
- 3) **Use Bluetooth with caution.** Some of the higher end keyboard/mouse bundles use Bluetooth technology instead of the standard wireless technology. So far, Bluetooth technology hasn't really impressed me because it is only moderately reliable. This includes Bluetooth headsets as well.
- 4) **Check the distance.** Make sure the maximum range that the keyboard and mouse support is sufficient for your needs. Typically they work around 30ft from the base unit, but some can operate farther. Make sure the one you choose has the right range for your needs.
- 5) **Battery Life.** Battery life is probably the most important criteria in finding a wireless keyboard/mouse. Some sets have built in batteries and a charger while others use standard AA and AAA batteries. Typically the ones that have batteries last longer but obviously don't have a charger.

## Ann's Tips for May 2008

by Ann Dodderidge

Have you been wondering about some of the keys on your keyboard? The first one you really need to know about is the Print Scrn key at the top on the right side of the keyboard. This key just takes a picture of the screen. After that you need to open another window like Word and then paste the picture there. Now you can make it smaller or larger and then print it out or send it to someone.

We will now move to the function keys at the top of the keyboard. I must admit that I just ignored them for a long time but now that I need to hook up my computer to a projector I had to learn them. If you have a new laptop the main function key is down on the left side. When you hold this key down along with one across the top different things will happen. For me to connect to a projector I need to hold this key down along with the F5 key. One of these keys will also turn off the mouse on the flat top keyboard so be careful. All you need to do is to re-hit it to turn back on but it took me a long time to figure that out. Some function key assignments common to Microsoft Office applications are: F7 to check spelling, Alt-F8 to call the macros dialog, Alt-F11 to call the Visual Basic Editor and Shift-Alt-F11 to call the Script Editor.

On most keyboards the function keys work the same along with the Windows logo key on the bottom left. F1 opens a help window. F2 will rename a file or folder. F3 opens the find files window. Instead of my going through all the F keys I suggest that you go to Google and type in Function keys and you will then be able to print out the whole list yourself and keep it near your computer to remind you what they do until you have it memorized.

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## Are You A Computer Pro?

If you know a lot about computers send me an e-mail and I'll include your article in the next Computer Observer.

Articles are proofread and edited upon final publication.

Send to Adam  
[adam@computerpros.cc](mailto:adam@computerpros.cc)

## Job Hunting Manatee/Sarasota

By Adam J. Richter M.S.

**Jobster** <http://www.jobster.com/>

**Hot Jobs** <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/>

**Bank Of America** <http://careers.bankofamerica.com/>

**FCCI** <http://www.fcci-group.com/Careers/default.asp>

**Sarasota Memorial** [http://www.smh.com/sections/careers/jobs\\_available/joblist.asp](http://www.smh.com/sections/careers/jobs_available/joblist.asp)

**Employ Florida** <http://www.employflorida.com/>

**Sarasota County** <https://pats.sarasotacounty.org/>

**Sarasota County School Board** <http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/humres/index2.html>

**Manatee County** [http://public.co.manatee.fl.us/inter/employ/position\\_docs/employ\\_list.html](http://public.co.manatee.fl.us/inter/employ/position_docs/employ_list.html)

**Manatee County School Board** <http://pats.manatee.k12.fl.us/pats/pats.nsf/MainWebFrameset?OpenFrameset>

**Sysco Palmetto** <http://www.syscowcf.com/employ.htm>

**USA Jobs Government** <http://www.usajobs.gov/>

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"A lot of children accidentally...increase their chances of being stalked by a predator." Pg.30

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# Tech Support Tips

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

## Top 5 Places You Can Find Things

Search engines are extremely powerful. They sort through millions of pages of information to find best quality results for your search.

Here are the top 5 places I search for things.

- 1) Google – The most popular general search engine.
- 2) Wikipedia – A great search engine if you are doing research.
- 3) Encarta.com – Encarta is offered from Microsoft/MSN, some of the features are unsearchable but a lot of the content is free.
- 4) Britannica.com – Britannica is also a subscription service but a lot of content is free.
- 5) Webmd.com – Is probably the best search engine for medical information.

## AVG

You may have noticed that AVG has upgraded to AVG 8. If you are using the free version then you probably have AVG 7.5. Don't worry about getting AVG 8 because it will eventually be available free.

I've been doing a little research on new antivirus programs as alternatives to AVG. Here are a few that I'll be testing soon:

- \*Avast Home Edition
- \*BitDefender Free Edition
- \*A-Squared Free
- \*Antivir Personal Edition
- \*ArcaMicroScan
- \*ClamWin Free Antivirus
- \*PC Tools Free Edition

AVG still works fine so there is no need to replace it but I like to have a few backup alternatives when needed.

Here is a great website to read about antivirus testing.  
<http://www.virus.gr/portal/en/>

## G-mail Problems

A batch of spammers have been trying to use G-mail to send out their spam messages and Google has disabled large batches of accounts.

If your account was one of the unlucky accounts to be disabled contact G-mail and the account will be re-enabled.

Google has had this problem for the past few years and they do the best they can to warn users to backup their files incase of situations like this.

## Windows Vista SP1 now released to automatic Update

### Powering Down

Newer computers (computers made in the last 5 years) have soft power buttons. If you are in a hurry and need to shut off your computer you can press the power button and the computer will proceed with the normal shutdown process. Old computers had a hard power button that was the equivalent of yanking the power cable from the back of the computer. This was not good for computers.

On laptops, pressing the power button doesn't always work because sometimes the laptop is configured to go into standby or sleep mode when the power button is pressed.

To configure your power settings you go to Control Panel and click 'Power Options.' Here you can set the inactivity time to turn off your computers screen and if you go to the advanced tab you can configure what your laptop does when the lid is closed and when the power button is pressed.

## Save Your Passwords

If you have a lot of passwords to remember you can use Roboforms [www.roboforms.com](http://www.roboforms.com) to save your passwords. It securely stores and enters your passwords for you and can be saved and moved to a different computer if necessary. The program is free to use and works great.



# The Venice Area Computer Users Group

The Next Meeting is Monday May 5th 2008 at 4:00 p.m. Venice Library

[www.thevacug.com](http://www.thevacug.com)

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 high quality demonstrations on the latest software and hardware available.

A one year membership is \$35.00 and includes a one year subscription to Computer Observer and admittance to each General Meeting and Class.

Invite a guest to the next meeting for just \$2.00. Non-members may join at the meeting or may print and bring an application from [www.thevacug.com](http://www.thevacug.com)

### Meeting Schedule

- 4:00-4:05 PM.....Sign-in
- 4:00-4:45 PM.....Forum – Computer Pros
- 4:45-5:00 PM.....Break
- 5:00-6:00 PM.....Guest Lecture
- 6:00-6:15 PM.....Prizes and Raffles

### Meeting Location

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



8392 S. Tamiami Trail  
Sarasota, FL 34238

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