

Bytes & Pieces

Newsletter of the Hobart Computer Users Group Inc.

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Hibernation

Most of us carefully choose Shut Down and then wait patiently, or impatiently, while Windows closes everything in sight before shutting the computer down. When we want to use the computer again, we again wait while Windows opens and then have to reopen the applications we commonly use. Wouldn't it be nice if we could speed up the Shut Down process and have Windows reopen our favourite applications when it restarts?

Actually, Windows XP comes with that ability built-in, but it may not be activated by default. Thus we must first turn it on and then learn to use it correctly. Here's what to do:

- Open the *Control Panel*
- Open *Power Options*
- Click on the *Hibernate* tab
- Tick *Enable Hibernation*
- Click on the *Advanced* tab
- If shown, set *When I press the power button* to *Hibernate*
- Otherwise, set *When I press the sleep button* to *Hibernate*

The options shown under the *Advanced* tab vary and you may have additional options, such as *When I close the lid of my laptop*, depending on what type of computer you have and what its BIOS supports. Having set all the relevant options, click *OK*.

Open your most commonly used applications and minimise them when you have finished using them. Don't shut them down. Press whichever button you have set to *Hibernate* and the computer should go into hibernation. When you reboot the computer, the applications you minimised will be available for immediate use.

You do not need, however, power button, sleep and lid options to hibernate your computer and if none of them is shown under the *Advanced* tab, just click *OK*. Instead of using a button, click *Start*, click *Turn Off computer* and you should see *Standby*, *Turn Off* and *Restart* buttons. Press the *Shift* key and *Standby* will become *Hibernate*. Click it and Windows XP should go into hibernation.

Hibernation is also available in Windows ME and the setup procedure is similar to that outlined above. Note, though, that hibernation uses some hard disk space to perform its magic and may not be an appropriate choice if your hard drive is nearly full. If that is the case, clear some space (or buy a bigger hard drive) first, before trying hibernation.

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Repairing Windows XP

I recently upgraded a computer – new motherboard, CPU and memory. When I went to reboot it, Windows XP reported an error and refused to boot. Not wanting to do a complete reinstall I opted for a repair.

Windows XP offers two repair modes, one for experts who speak Command Line fluently and one for those of us who don't.

To access the repair modes you need to boot your computer from your Windows XP installation disc. The first time the installation stops and asks you to select what you want to do, ignore the “Press R to repair using the recovery console” and proceed as if you were going to do a reinstall. During the next stage, the installation program will search for an already installed version of Windows XP and, if not too damaged, will again pause and offer you a repair option. That's the one to choose by pressing R.

The installation program will resume and delete a number of files. It will then proceed and appear to be doing a complete reinstall. However, at the end of it, all your previously installed applications will be accessible and everything should be back to normal.

If you have made major hardware changes, as I had, you will be asked to reactivate Windows XP. You can do this online or by telephone. You may even have to talk to Microsoft and convince them you aren't trying to install your copy of Windows XP on a second computer. You will not be asked to provide personal details – only the identification code generated by Windows XP and to explain why you need to reactivate. Read the identification code out carefully to the Microsoft operator. Once you do this, he/she will give you a 48 character code to type in to reactivate Windows XP.

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BartPE

There are other occasions when you may need to repair your computer, clean up a virus, or do other maintenance work. On those occasions, Windows XP's repair mode may not be sufficient and some other tools may be needed.

One very useful tool is PEBuilder. When run PEBuilder builds a cut-down version of XP named BartPE which runs entirely from the CD drive. While the default build is useful, it will pay you to study the tutorial and help files to learn how to build a custom version of BartPE. Such a custom version can include a wide selection of tools of your choosing. For example, you can include your favourite antivirus and anti-spyware software, registry cleaner, disk scanner, registry cleaner and so on. You can also include a web browser, word processor, and, in fact, just about any other Windows applications you wish. For some of them, though, you may have to write a short text file to allow them to be included. Full instructions on how to do that are available in the help and tutorial files.

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Paragon Rescue Kit

Sometimes, however, BartPE won't cut through the corruption and you will need to go to a recovery or rescue kit. One of the best is Paragon's complete rescue kit, featured on the *PC User* disc for April 2006. This previously sold for \$53, but, for a short time, you can have it for the price of the magazine – a mere \$8.95. The software comes on DVD, but you can request a CD from the publishers if you don't have a DVD drive. (Maybe it's time you put one in?) Or you can get a friend to make the rescue disc as described below.

To make the rescue disc, you will need to burn a CD from the .ISO file supplied. The resultant CD presents you with a boot menu from which you can choose to boot into Paragon's Linux, PTS DOS, or look for a usable OS on your hard disk. In most cases you will use the Linux boot. If you have problems with the screen graphics, reboot and choose Paragon Linux (Safe Mode) or PTS DOS (Safe Mode).

The file manager provided on the disc is Midnight Commander and resembles XTree Pro from the days when we all used DOS systems – graphically primitive but effective, when you work out how to use it. With it you can make

disk images, copy files, browse the contents of an unbootable hard disk and much more.

I recently dealt with a drive where a combination of a BIOS patch, disabled GoBack 3.0 and corruption had rendered the drive unreadable under Windows. However, the Paragon Linux enabled me to copy all the files from the drive to a USB drive, from which I later made DVD copies. Without a tool of this calibre, the only option would have been to wipe the drive, losing all the data it contained.

Grab this one while the magazine is still in the shops, you never know when you may need it.

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Website woes

Recently, our web host, Stokia Networks, upgraded their software. Although the FrontPage extensions needed for the correct updating and operation of our website appear to be turned on, FrontPage 2000 and 2003 both report that they are not. This combined with my lack of broadband is making it difficult to correctly update the site. For example, you may find pages which inform you that the next meeting is 14 February 2006 with the subject One Note still emblazoned across them. That's is a header that hasn't yet updated. You may also find that you cannot search the site, getting a 404 error instead.

If I am not able to solve the problems in the near future, two alternatives present themselves. The first is to hand the complete website on a disc to someone with broadband and FrontPage 2003 and have them try to upload it overwriting all existing files. The other is to abandon FrontPage and reconstruct the website using some other software that doesn't need require special extensions. That would take some time to do and would not be ready for some weeks. Stay tuned for developments.

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Next meeting

Most of us regularly use email, but are we getting the best out of it? Are you at risk of losing all your old emails, because you haven't backed them up? How should you do that? Are you inundated with spam? What can you/your Internet Service Provider do to control this? Is Eudora superior to Thunderbird? Is Outlook better than Outlook Express? What about Intellimail? Are there other email clients you might consider?

Come along to the G. A. Wood Hall, 29 Bathurst Street, Hobart at 8.00 pm on Tuesday, 11 April 2006 and with the help of some of our more experienced users, we will try to answer some, or all, of these questions.

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Vista delayed

Windows XP was released in 2001, if I remember rightly, and its successor – codenamed “Longhorn” – was expected in 2004. When Microsoft announced the name “Vista” for the former “Longhorn”, it also announced a release date of 2006. Despite the omission of some of the features originally promised, Vista's release has been delayed to the end of this year. Enterprises will receive Vista in November, but the consumer edition won't now be released until January 2007.

This pattern of delays in producing new versions of Windows has seemingly got worse since the release of Windows 95, while Microsoft Office has been updated regularly and reliably every couple of years. The head of the Office division has therefore been moved to head up the Windows division. Will that lead to more regular releases of new Windows versions? Stay tuned.

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Googled!

Tourbus.com, a website and newsletter which has spent the last several years bringing you the best of the Internet, suddenly disappeared from Google. Its proprietors asked Google what happened but say that they haven't had a response. Check it out for yourself. Type *info:tourbus.com* into your Google search bar and see what happens.

So, frustrated by their website disappearing from Google's listing and unable to rectify the situation, Patrick Crispin and Bob Rankin chose a new domain name – www.internettourbus.com – and were relisted by Google. Try typing *info:internettourbus.com*, they suggested. So I did just now and got:

[This Domain is Expired!](#)

Learn more about: Private Domain registrations, Domain backordering PLUS, buy used Domain names, bulk Domain prices slashed and more! ...

www.internettourbus.com/

Google can show you the following information for this URL:

- Show [Google's cache](#) of internettourbus.com
- Find web pages that are [similar to](#) internettourbus.com
- Find web pages that [link to](#) internettourbus.com
- Find web pages [from the site](#) internettourbus.com
- Find web pages that [contain the term](#) "internettourbus.com"

Only the cache link leads anywhere and, surprisingly, from the page in cache, you can actually go to <http://www.internettourbus.com>, a domain which isn't expired! Typing the URL <http://www.tourbus.com> into the address bar of your browser will take you to internettourbus.com, so why aren't they there when you ask Google for information?

I don't know what Patrick and Bob did to Google, but I am willing to take a guess that what they're planning now isn't very polite!

If two sites have been "mislaidd" like this, how many more are affected? Until Google sorts itself out, I've switched to Ask.com – a change that's easy to make in Firefox. Just add the Ask extension to the drop-down list of search engines (if it isn't there already), open the list and click on it.

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Broadband in the bush

The Federal Government is providing incentives to Internet Service Providers to extend broadband coverage beyond the 4 km (or so) range that Telstra has decreed acceptable via phone lines. But what is available?

When I moved out of town, I applied for my broadband service to be relocated, only to find that Telstra found that the line wasn't good enough. Telstra held the application pending an assessment of demand and the viability of upgrading the line. Then I tried Tasmanet (<http://www.tasmanet.com.au>). Tasmania's terrain makes many line of sight microwave links impossible without repeaters and Tasmanet has invested in many prime locations in an effort to provide as much wireless coverage as possible. However, their coverage doesn't currently include my home. They suggested another wireless provider, OneWire. As OneWire requires a 3-year contract I decided not to check whether they could provide coverage.

That left two options: satellite and being patient. Cheapest satellite service appears to be BorderNet (<http://www.bordernet.com.au>). Whether you are eligible for one-way or two-way satellite depends on whether you can get an ISDN service on your phone line. If you cannot, then two-way satellite attracts the full government subsidy. Even with the Broadband Connect subsidy, satellite broadband isn't cheap and requires a minimum 18 months contract, some providers requiring 3 years.

Being patient has its own rewards. It allows time for Aurora to complete its broadband over powerlines trials and begin rolling its service out more widely. It also allows time for Telstra to deliberate and to upgrade the line. And that is what has now happened. Once Internode activate my broadband account in the next few days, I will be back on broadband without needing a government subsidy, nor a 4 foot satellite dish!

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