



DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

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Welcome to the twenty-eighth edition of the *DWPC Technology Newsletter*. We hope you find this information helpful. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send us an email, indicating such. If you received this newsletter from a friend and wish to be added to the mailing list, please send an email to the address above and indicate your desire to receive the newsletter. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends.

The holidays are nearly upon us! It seems like it was just a couple of months ago that I wrote my last holiday newsletter. Time has really flown by, this year (my first year operating as an LLC)! There are lots of technological items available that will please the geek, geekette and geek-wannabe, as well. Like last year, hot items include cell phones (I like the Samsung Galaxy S7, and there is the new iPhone 7), smart watches (including the new Apple Watch Series 2), tablets, notebooks, convertibles, MFPs (multifunction peripherals), drones (remember, if between .5-55 pounds, the drone must be operated [outdoors] by someone over 16 years of age, and must be registered with the FAA—see http://www.faa.gov/uas/media/Part_107_Summary.pdf), intelligent remote controls (I like the Logitech Harmony series), sound bars (some now allow wireless surround speakers!) and other home theater audio as well as televisions and projectors (4K sets are coming down in price!). Some new additions this year include VR (virtual reality) headsets (standalone or that use a cell phone as the display—the former being available at under \$20) and wireless routers (with the advent of the wireless AC standard and more devices able to use the 5GHz WiFi band, providing more range, security and speed—but, before purchasing a new wireless router, find if your ISP (Internet Service Provider) will provide you with a new, dual-band wireless AC gateway, at no additional charge). If your wireless router or gateway is over 3 years old, you can likely benefit from an upgrade.

Apple announces their new iPhone 7, 7 Plus and Apple Watch Series 2. Apple must finally be listening. Their new iPhone 7s are finally “splash and water resistant” (although they don’t suggest immersing the phone in water, as shown with the Galaxy S7 in a Samsung commercial, and Apple indicates the degree of water and dust resistance “might decrease as a result of normal wear”). The iPhone 7s also have Apple’s highest-capacity iPhone battery (which is still not user-replaceable). There is also still no memory expansion option for the iPhone 7s (they are available with 32GB, 128GB or 256GB memory). The iPhone 7 sports a 4.7” Retina display, with a 1334x750 resolution and the iPhone 7 Plus sports a 5.5” Retina display, with a HD (1920 x 1080) resolution (compare this with the Samsung Galaxy S7’s 5.1” display with 2560x1440 resolution). There is no longer a headphone jack in the iPhone 7s (the devices come with an adapter that adapts the Lightning connector to be used with conventional 3.5mm headphone plugs, as well as EarPods that have a Lightning connector). The new iPhones have a new “advanced” camera system with enhanced low-light abilities and a 12MP rear camera and a 7MP front-facing camera. Apple claims the iPhone 7s are 2 times faster than the iPhone 6 and the iPhone 7s include stereo speakers that are twice as loud as the iPhone 6s. **Now for the Apple Watch Series 2.** The newest Apple Watch has a built-in GPS, faster processor, water resistance to 50 meters and a display that is twice as bright as the original Apple Watch. As with the original Apple Watch, the Series 2 only works with iPhones (sorry, Android users!).

What’s the “Internet of Things” (IoT)? There is a new paradigm where our appliances are connected to the Internet. Of course you already have your computer, tablet, cell phone, gaming consoles and entertainment centers connected to the Internet. Some also have their lights, HVAC and security system(s), including door bell, connected to the Internet. Now, manufacturers are integrating networkable devices inside things such as appliances. Why would you want your toaster to tweet that you just ejected a perfectly-browned piece of toast? You probably wouldn’t (although there are some who may . . .). How about checking your refrigerator from your cell phone, while at the store, to ensure you have all the ingredients you need? Hmmm . . . that sounds useful. Although I am not feeling the need to replace my appliance with ones that are Internet-enabled (to become part of the IoT), I believe there is a significant benefit we can see from this technology, and am excited to follow it as it develops.

“Virtual Desktops” with Windows 10. Windows 10 introduces “virtual desktops” (which have long been available in other operating systems), that can allow you to create more space for your computing. Press the Windows key, along with the Tab key, and you will see your current Desktop, with open apps in tiles. You may click on any of the tiles to switch to that program, but wait, there is a “+ New desktop” option in the lower-right corner of the screen! Select “+ New desktop” and you will create a new desktop (e.g. “Desktop 2”), which you can select to open and arrange additional programs, on the new Desktop. You can switch between these Desktops by pressing the Windows key, along with the Tab key, then selecting the Desktop you desire. You may also close a Desktop by hovering over the Desktop you wish to close, then selecting the “X” in the upper-right corner.

"Microsoft" support scams—revisited. These scams usually begin with an unsolicited phone call, usually from a foreigner, who will often misrepresent themselves as or imply being affiliated with Microsoft. They may try to convince you that they have been informed by Microsoft that your computer has been infected and that it is **imperative** that you **immediately** allow them to remotely connect to your computer so they can "resolve" the issues . . . **for a price**. They often stress that, if things are left as they are, terrible things will happen. Microsoft will **never** call a user on the telephone, unsolicited, and ask to connect to their computer to troubleshoot it. You should always question when anyone wants you to do something immediately, without providing any time to make an intelligent decision. If the scammer is allowed access to your computer, they will often open the Event Viewer and show the target all the "problems" your computer has. Nearly all Windows machines will have some warnings or errors in the Event Viewer . . . and they often don't constitute a "problem". Sometimes, these scammers will try to sell you "support packages" that are charged, annually. Once they have control of your computer, they have the same level of access as whoever is logged into the computer . . . so they can install malicious software or harvest information to use for identity theft. If you feel you have malicious software on your computer, David W. Potts Consulting will be happy to help evaluate your computer and help eradicate the malware for you.

Scam and fraud resources are available through the office of the Oregon Attorney General. As scammers are quickly creating elaborate ways to separate you from your money, I strongly suggest you use complex passwords, that you change often, and visit the Oregon Attorney General's Web site at www.oregonconsumer.gov, to keep abreast of newer scams and help learn ways to keep you and your family safer. You can also contact Ellen Klem of the Oregon Attorney General's office at ellen.klem@state.or.us or 503.507.1061.

Java and QuickTime Security Alerts! As Oracle's Java and Apple's QuickTime continue to be security risks, I am continuing to include warnings in my newsletters. You can view the alert from Homeland Security about QuickTime, here: <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/alerts/TA16-105A>. Oracle has published a Web page that details how to disable the Java program, at: http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable_browser.xml. Either program can be uninstalled from the Programs and Features Control Panel. If you do need to run Java, ensure you are using the latest release and remove any old versions. If you have any questions about this or other security issues (or any other computer questions), please feel free to contact David W. Potts Consulting and we will be happy to help you.

How do I . . . Please submit questions to me via email to the email address at the top of page 1. Questions may be answered in future issues of this newsletter, or may be addressed individually. I often have clients who exclaim, after my correcting their issue, how they have been frustrated by working on an issue for weeks before calling me. Often the problem takes less than an hour to correct. Many mention how, next time, they will call me first to avoid the frustration! I have helped people do things from selecting and programming a high-tech remote control to setting up a company's network infrastructure.

David W. Potts Consulting will be happy to assist you with your hardware, software and network selection, purchase, integration, troubleshooting and training. We specialize in Microsoft Windows computers and networking and can also assist you with home theatre and other electronics and technology consulting.

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