



# DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

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**Welcome to the thirty-seventh 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.

**Privacy concerns with Verizon’s “Oath”** Verizon has an advertising arm they have strangely branded “Oath.” According to Verizon, “. . . ‘Oath’, [is] a digital and mobile media company with more than 50 brands globally (including *Yahoo*, HuffPost, Engadget, TechCrunch, Moviefone and Makers), and a member of the Verizon family of companies working to shape the future of media.” According to new terms of service for “Oath” companies, users grant the right to Oath (Verizon) to scan your email and use information they glean to target advertisements to its individual customers. You also give up your right to trial in the event of a dispute (forcing arbitration) and adds a “class action waiver.” AOL (America Online) is also owned by Verizon and is part of “Oath.” There are many companies that have partnered with Yahoo to provide email to their customers. As such, you could be using Yahoo mail, without realizing it. Read an EULA (end-user license agreement) some time and you will likely be surprised at the rights you could be giving up!

**The Galaxy S9 and S9+** are the newest of Samsung’s smartphones. The Galaxy S9 and larger Galaxy S9+ both offer an edge-to-edge display and water-resistance (IP67; tested immersed in water to 1 meter for up to 30 minutes) and can be upgraded with up to 400GB of MicroSD memory (they come with 64GB internal memory). Like all Samsung Galaxy phones since the Galaxy S6, the Galaxy S9 series do not have a user-replaceable battery (the only fault I found with the phone). Like the Galaxy S7 and S8, the Galaxy S9 series supports fast wireless charging. The Galaxy S9 sports a 5.8” display and the Galaxy S9+ has a 6.2” display—both with a 2960 x 1440 (“quad HD”) resolution—and have no physical button(s) on the front, like the Galaxy S8 series. The main camera also supports UHD (3840x2160) resolution, at 60fps (for slow-motion). Samsung states the Galaxy S9 supports super-slow motion . . . for short bursts. Both devices include Samsung’s “Bixby” assistant (similar to Siri, Alexa, etc.). These new phones sport an 8MP front camera and a 12MP rear camera, with a flash, like the Galaxy S8 series, but include a low light mode that opens the iris of the main camera for low light photos. Of course, the Galaxy S9 series supports dual-band WiFi, and Wireless AC. If you are in the market for a new cell phone, I would *seriously* consider the Galaxy S9 series.

**CPU, GPU, APU . . . what do these mean?** A CPU, GPU and APU, all share the same “PU”—or “processing unit”—in their acronyms. The three are all actually “microprocessors,” with slightly different uses. The original microprocessor was a CPU, or “Central Processing Unit,” doing all the “thinking” for the computer. The “CPU” has become used to also describe the entire computer assembly . . . the “tower,” if you will. Later, engineers decided they could place a microprocessor onto graphics cards, a GPU or “Graphics Processing Unit”, offloading much of the workload for rendering graphics from the CPU, giving the CPU more “cycles” to perform other tasks. As things progressed, people found they could actually use the GPU to help with other computing tasks, taking even more load off the CPU. Now comes the APU or “Accelerated Processing Unit,” incorporating the CPU and the GPU into a single chip . . . making it more efficient to move data between these two processors.

**US CERT releases warnings about phishing and tech support scams** The United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US CERT) has recently released warnings, received from the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) about tech support scams, and can be found, here: <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/current-activity/2018/03/29/IC3-Issues-Alert-Tech-Support-Fraud>. US CERT has provided a link to help computer users to avoid phishing scams, here: <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/tips/ST04-014>. In this age, the end user must be the first line of defense with their technology.

**Windows 7 reaches its end-of-life January, 2020** Microsoft will stop supporting Windows 7 in January of 2020. Once an operating system has reached his end-of-life, its manufacturers no longer offer updates. Updates are often to close security holes, so, once an operating system is unsupported, vulnerabilities will not be addressed. If you are running a computer with Windows 7, you will want to upgrade to a new computer before 2020.

**Android apps found with surveillance malware!** There have been reports of multiple pieces of malware that turns an Android device into a surveillance device, doing things such as tracking the user's location, sending messages, recording audio, video and phone calls . . . without the user of the device having no clue they are being surveilled. Reports indicate the malware poses as a fake Android app that is installed by downloading and installing the fake app *from the official Google Play store*, possibly through a phishing attack. There have also been reports of malware that runs on an Android device that uses the device to mine cryptocurrency (for the perpetrator of the malware). I strongly suggest researching any app or computer program before choosing to install it, and ensuring you download anything from a trusted source (although, in this case, the Google Play store *is* considered a safe source, as malware apps in the Google Play store are extremely rare, and, once found, are removed by Google).

**It's not too late for 'Net Neutrality!** The current administration's directions to have the FCC roll back 'Net neutrality are not yet set in stone. As described in an earlier newsletter, 'Net neutrality basically inhibits Internet Service Providers (ISPs) from limiting content or slowing access to specific content. An example would be an ISP who also offers TV service could choosing to block or limit the speed of streaming services, such as NetFlix, incentivizing its users to use their TV service. If you believe in 'Net neutrality, please contact your congressional representatives and voice your opinion!

**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](http://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](mailto: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 the US Computer Emergency Readiness Team about QuickTime, at <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/alerts/TA16-105A>. Oracle has a Web page that details how to disable Java, at: [http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable\\_browser.xml](http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable_browser.xml). Either program can be uninstalled from the Windows 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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