



DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

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Welcome to the forty-first edition of the *DWPC Technology Newsletter*. Happy New Year! We hope you and yours had a wonderful holiday season and that you will have a very prosperous New Year. 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.

Microsoft Windows System Restore . . . are you protected? Microsoft has included a troubleshooting and repair utility, called Windows System Restore, in all versions of Microsoft Windows, since Windows XP. Essentially, Windows System Restore creates “Restore Points” that hold things like Registry settings, copies of boot files and other essential files, that can be used to “restore” your computer to an earlier point in time. Microsoft System Restore should not affect user data files, and, although it is not a “magic fix-all,” it can be used to recover from many issues. Windows System Restore should be enabled on your Windows “boot drive” (generally the “C: drive”) and any other drive or partition that holds program files. Unfortunately, some Windows Updates can cause Windows System Restore settings to change . . . such as turning System Restore *off*, even though System Restore was on, before the update, resulting in previous Restore Points being deleted, and System Restore protection being disabled (until manually enabled). A common practice of malware is to disable System Restore, so the user cannot use this facility to help eradicate an infection. Even if System Restore is enabled, it will not always complete, successfully, and, even if it does, there are some issues it will not resolve. As such, I strongly suggest using an external USB hard disk drive, for Windows Image Backups, along with your Windows System Restore. Generally, the older the restore point, the less likely it will produce a successful System Restore, so it is important to address issues sooner, rather than later. Please feel free to call us if you would like to discuss Windows System Restore, Windows Backup, or other security items.

Microsoft pulls the Windows 10 V. 1809 update Microsoft has verified reports of data disappearing, after computers performed the Windows 10 V. 1809 update. Microsoft pulled the problematic update, so this issue was only present a short period. Microsoft continues to create and provide other Windows Updates, many of which are to help enhance the stability and security of Windows computers. Data loss can be mitigated by using a backup solution—either local or online (in the “Cloud”), or both. Please contact us if you are interested in implementing a backup solution and we will be happy to discuss options, as well as their benefits and pitfalls.

I just want to play with my new toys! Technology has given us many new gizmos. Unfortunately, we often find we need to spend a great deal of time to learn how to set up and use these new toys and tools. Sometimes, when we find how much effort is necessary to learn, before we get to use our new toy, it just sits in a box. Other times, we may learn just enough to get something out of the item—but not use much of its full potential. We specialize in technology. Even if we are not familiar with your specific item, we can usually apply our knowledge of technologies to new devices. Please let us help you learn to use your new devices to help take the frustration out of your new toys!

Comcast is rolling out Amazon Prime Video capability For a number of years, Comcast has allowed its users to watch Netflix streaming video from their cable STB (set-top box)--assuming the region in which you reside supports the service, you have compatible Comcast equipment and (at least after the 1 month free trial) subscribe to the Netflix streaming video service. Now, Comcast is rolling out Amazon Prime streaming video, as well. As with Netflix, the first month of service is offered, free of charge, so you can try the service before making a commitment. Unlike Netflix, the subscription to Amazon Prime includes Amazon Prime Video, at no additional charge, but also entitles subscribers to receive multiple additional benefits, including free two day shipping for “Prime-eligible products.” Call Comcast to find if the Amazon Prime Video service is available, in your area.

What is “QLED” or Quantum Dot technology? Many people confuse “QLED” or “quantum dot” display technology as a type of “OLED” (organic light-emitting diode) technology. “QLED” is Samsung’s trademark for their quantum dot technology. Unlike OLED technology, where the LEDs produce the light for each pixel, quantum dot displays are more similar to LCD or LED displays, that shine a florescent or LED “backlight,” respectively, through filters and an LCD matrix. As the LEDs in an OLED display actually produce the light, they also have the ability to turn the LED(s) completely off, producing the truest black. The quantum dot display technology also shines an LED backlight through filters and an LCD matrix, but the quantum dots are microscopic in size and can create different wavelengths (colors), based on their size. Our TVs use red, green and blue (RGB) pixels to create the full range of colors. As such, we can produce all three colors, using different sized quantum dots. Quantum dots can use a single wavelength and turn it into different wavelengths . . . using a blue backlight, quantum dots can create the red and green components. Quantum dot technology is new . . . and improvements are on the horizon. In a nutshell, although the quantum dot technology is “better” than LED or LCD, currently, OLED technology produces the best picture.

What does HDR mean with HDTVs? Many newer HDTVs advertise they use HDR technology. HDR stands for High Dynamic Range. With video, the dynamic range refers to the difference between the brightest and darkest portions of the screen, at a given point in time (dynamic range in the audio world means the difference between the loudest and softest components at a given point in time). The higher the dynamic range, the greater the difference, so HDR provides a greater difference between the dark and light components, providing a more lifelike picture.

What is IPS display technology? Many new monitors and HDTVs utilize IPS technology, which stands for In-Plane Switching. As outlined before, LCD, LED and “QLED” or “Quantum Dot LED” technologies all utilize a liquid crystal matrix to help produce the final image. In a nutshell, ISP technology orients the liquid crystals in parallel, which can aid in color accuracy and increased viewing angles.

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, and report potential scams. 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 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. 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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