



DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

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Volume 8 Number 2 March-April, 2019



Welcome to the forty-second 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.

Look, before your click! Unfortunately, there are many nefarious entities who try to use social engineering techniques to coax users to visit infected Websites, to compromise the computer's security or try to extort money from the user. How can you tell which links are "safer," versus links that could be dangerous? Popular Web browsers will show the destination URL (Universal Resource Locator . . . the "Web address"), in the lower-left corner of the browser, while hovering over a link, so you can see where you will be directed, before you click. Generally, unless the URL is from a Domain that looks rather familiar, I pause and consider if I should trust that Website. Two of the most important factors are the "top-level Domain" and the "highest level Subdomain." In the following example URL: www.oregoncomputer.com/site/newsletters.html, the top-level Domain is "com" (of .com) and the highest level Subdomain is "oregoncomputer". As an example, anything that has oregoncomputer.com before the first "/" *must* be hosted by oregoncomputer.com (e.g. www.oregoncomputer.net could be hosted by someone other than oregoncomputer.com). How can this help you? Before you click on a link you think is to your bank, hover over the link and check the URL in the lower-left corner of your browser, and ensure the link will take you to www.yourbank.com, not www.imgonnastealyourmoney.com. With so many criminals out there, we, as the computer end-users, must be the first line of our own defense.

What is a Chromebook? "Chromebooks" are a newer type of notebook or tablet computer that [primarily] use the Internet and "Cloud storage." Although Chromebooks have been around for a number of years, they have gained popularity, lately, being generally less expensive than devices running Windows or MacOS and being less prone to viruses and other malware than computers running Windows or MacOS. The operating system for Chromebooks is called "Chrome OS." Chrome OS is similar to the Android operating system found in many tablets and phones (both Chrome OS and the Android OS are written by Google). Chromebooks are similar to Android and iOS devices (iPads, iPhones and iPods run the Apple iOS operating system) and computers running "Windows 10 in the S Mode," in that they generally only run apps that are available from the manufacturer's respective "store" (the Google Play Store, Apple App Store or the Microsoft App Store, respectively). One difference with Windows 10 computers in the "S Mode" is that a Windows 10 "S Mode" computer can be switched, once, to the standard, full-featured, Windows 10, to run standard Windows programs (not only items available through the Microsoft App Store). Once switching a computer from the Windows 10 "S Mode" [to the full-featured Windows 10 mode], you will not be able to switch back to the "S Mode." Although Chromebook users can perform tasks like authoring a document or playing music or movies, offline (using "offline-ready apps"), a Chromebook is meant to be used, while connected to the Internet. As is the case with many modern notebook or UltraBook computers, Chromebooks do not include an optical drive (CD, DVD or Blu-Ray drive). Chromebooks support only limited printers and MFPs (multifunction peripherals), and, to scan to a Chromebook, the scanner (or MFP) must support scanning to "Google Drive" (unless the manufacturer provides a Chrome app for scanning). MacOS X, Android and Chrome OS are based on versions of Linux/UNIX, providing these operating systems with some inherent security (making them less vulnerable to viruses and other malware, although, due to the market share of Apple Macs, MacOS X is slightly more vulnerable than Android or Chrome OS). As the data for a Chromebook is generally kept in the "Cloud," when signing into another Chromebook, using your Google account, you have access to your same data. Although Chromebooks do have some local storage (not backed up), there is generally no need to perform further data backup, with a Chromebook. Chromebooks come in various screen sizes, both conventional and touchscreen, with various CPU, RAM and SSD (solid state drive) configurations. Although Chromebooks are more similar to a [non-Windows] tablet or smartphone than a "conventional" (Mac or Windows) computer, there are users that can perform all the tasks they do, with a Chromebook.

New regulations for drone licensing The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) has changed its regulations regarding labeling drones with their FAA ID. As of December 21, 2015, any new drone, between .55 pounds and 55 pounds, must be registered with the FAA [before flying the drone, outdoors]. You must be a minimum of 13 years old to register a drone. Your registration number must be attached to the drone(s). **The new regulations state the registration number of the drone must be visible on the outside of the drone.** The old regulations allowed placing the FAA ID number in an internal location, such as the battery compartment, as long as the area could be accessed, without tools. You are required to have a copy of your registration with you, when flying. This registration copy can be electronic. Only one registration is needed, for all drones owned by an individual. You can find more information on requirements and can register your drone(s) at <http://www.faa.gov/uas/registration/>.

Countdown to Windows 7 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 manufacturer no longer offers 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 consider upgrading to a new computer, before 2020. As so many computers are still running Windows 7, I will continue to provide reminders, throughout 2019, in my newsletters. As reported in my newsletter from July-August, 2018 (Volume 7, Number 4), there is a possibility your Windows 7 computer has a “reservation” for Windows 10. If your computer keeps up with you, it may be worth trying the Windows 10 Upgrade, to see if your computer has a Windows 10 reservation. I strongly suggest backing up your computer, before any major upgrades. Please let us help you see if your computer can be upgraded to Windows 10 or help migrate you to a new computer.

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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