



DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

david.w.potts@att.net www.oregoncomputer.com 503.659.5588

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Welcome to the forty-fourth 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.

“Reset” Windows 10? Windows 10 provides users with the option to “reset” the operating system--essentially making the computer look like it did when it was new. This can be helpful if you have malicious software on the computer or other settings, etc., causing the computer to be slow or misbehave. Windows 10 may periodically display a pop-up message, asking if you wish to reset the computer (indicating resetting the computer may help with issues). **Please be aware the Windows 10 “reset” will remove settings and any software that has been added or changed since the computer was new (or the Windows 10 upgrade was performed).** During the process of “resetting” Windows 10, you will be presented with the option to save your personal data or to erase the personal data. **If you choose to “remove everything” (as opposed to “keep my files”), the process will erase your personal data!** Essentially, all files that were not on the computer when it was new will be deleted, including documents, spreadsheets, locally-saved email, etc. If you don’t want to keep your personal data (selecting to “remove everything”), you will be further provided the options to “remove all files and clean the drive” or “just remove my files.” Although “just remove my files” is adequate if you plan to re-use the computer, yourself, if you plan to give the computer to someone else, selecting to “remove all files and clean the drive” will make it significantly more difficult to recover the deleted data. As described in the dialogs, all options will result in all programs and settings, that were not on the computer when it was new (or upgraded), being removed. Although “resetting” Windows 10 can resolve issues, there are a number of less nuclear options that could resolve issues. As outlined in many earlier newsletters, I strongly suggest using a USB hard disk drive to create backups of your computer’s data, including a System Image (all supported versions of Windows include utilities to create image backups, saving programs, settings and data). I recently experienced a client who received “reset” the Windows pop-up, asking if they wanted to “reset” Windows . . . and performed the reset (she didn’t recognize the “reset” would remove her programs). Luckily, as she had an image backup on her USB hard disk drive, we were able to easily restore her computer to before the event.

Using a VPN for privacy VPNs, or Virtual Private Networks, have been used for decades by businesses to allow users access to resources on the business’ internal network, from remote locations. With online privacy being such an issue, many users are looking to VPNs to help protect their identity, while browsing the Internet. Essentially, when you connect to a VPN, your computer appears to be on the business’ internal network, even though the access is remote. VPNs should encrypt the data between the remote computer and the business network, making it inaccessible to those “sniffing” around the Internet. Essentially, you are using the Internet connection of the VPN’s Internet Service Provider while connected to the VPN . . . so your ISP cannot see what you are doing, online (while connected through the VPN). If you are considering using a VPN to help protect your online privacy, you will want to research the options, as a shady VPN provider could also sell your information, such as your browsing history, or use your Internet connection for nefarious purposes. A VPN connection requires VPN software running on the user’s computer. You should be able to connect to VPNs through your ISP, as well as at WiFi HotSpots. One nice thing about VPNs is that, when using them on WiFi HotSpots that could be questionable, the VPN software will encrypt the data, so the questionable WiFi connection doesn’t need to be “trusted.” While shopping for a VPN solution, make sure to ensure they not only don’t track any of your data but that they have software that runs on all the devices you wish to use [with the VPN], e.g Windows and Mac computers, tablets, smartphones, etc. Keep in mind that, if you use your employer’s VPN, although the data is encrypted between your device and their network, they can track anything you do, once on their network (so, if privacy is your main concern, this is not your best option).

8K TV . . . Really? You have probably heard the hype about the “next big thing” in HDTV, 8K. “8K” is four times the resolutions of 4K; 7680x4320 vs. 4K at 3840x2160 . . . which is four times “full HD” (1080) at 1920x1080 pixels. I have read multiple articles, regarding the “resolution” the human eye can discern. There has to be some extrapolation when determining the “resolution” of the human eye, as we do not see in “pixels,” as digital rendering presents. We also have “zones” where we see more color, etc., which is also different from the digital displays. I have seen articles, on one end, stating the human eye cannot fully discern the equivalent of 7680x4320 (33,177,600) pixels, and others stating the human eye should be able to fully discern the equivalent of 4320P, but, essentially, this is the upper edge of the capability of the human eye. What you can discern is your “field of view,” and, you see more clearly toward the center of your field of view. Consider that, as you may be able to fully discern 4320, in your full field of view, as your field of view expands to include things other than the TV (e.g. the wall behind the TV, lamps, etc.), the percentage of the field of view that includes the monitor rapidly decreases. In other words, it is likely you cannot realize the full advantage of an 8K TV . . . unless, possibly, it takes up your entire field of view. How would that compare with a 4K TV or monitor? Let me digress a bit. When I was much younger, I considered myself an audiophile. I knew many other audiophiles. Some of these people insisted on having equipment with the highest specifications. I must admit that my budget was smaller than many of these other audiophiles, but, if I could not tell the difference between one piece of equipment and another that costs much more, I would generally choose the equipment that performs to my satisfaction, rather than paying for the bragging rights that my equipment is more “perfect.” Back to the present. I can walk up to many 4K sets and, with 4K content, and see absolutely no pixelization . . . meaning, to my older eyes, it is “perfect.” Granted, if you are younger and like to have the bragging rights, 8K may work for you. In my humble opinion, I believe the majority will benefit from a 4K TV, with advanced features such as HDR (high dynamic range, for deeper blacks and brighter colors) and OLED (organic light-emitting diode) or quantum dot technologies.

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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