

Diablo Blue

July, 2002



The Monthly Newsletter of the Diablo Valley PC User's Group

July 11, 2002 Meeting Announcement Chris Perillo of [Locker gnome](#) and [TechTV](#)

Note that the July meeting is going to be a week later than our usual first Thursday — that's because the first Thursday of July is the July 4th Independence Day holiday, and no one will be there. So join us on the **second** Thursday, **July 11**, for a DVPC meeting that's going to be a real hit. From Des Moines, Iowa, and San Francisco, California comes the Internet phenomenon known as [Locker gnome](#) (www.lockergnome.com). Chris Pirillo and his digital gang distribute personality-driven tech newsletters. Customer Satisfaction is one of their primary goals, and the readers (Gnomies) will agree. Chris is also the host of the popular TechTV show [Call for Help](#) (www.techtv.com/callforhelp). You can read all about Chris at www.lockergnome.com/chris.html, or not, but be sure to come to the July 11 DVPC meeting and find out why this guy is called an "Internet phenomenon". You'll be glad that you did.

DVPC meetings are held in the lobby conference room in Building B at the Bank of America Technology Center office complex in Concord, located near the northeast corner of Clayton Road at Galindo (see the Map to Monthly Meetings on page 15). Please use the entrance that's on the east side near the southeast corner of the building. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

The New Users SIG holds its meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to the regular DVPC monthly meeting on the first Thursday of each month at Bank of America building B. We discuss whatever is confusing or puzzling new PC users. If you are a new user of PCs who would like to meet with other new users — and some experienced users who can answer your questions as well — then join us at the New Users SIG meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to each DVPC monthly meeting.

We'll also have the Networking Table from 6:30 to 7:00; if you have something to sell or trade, need technical help, or just want to exchange views, visit the Networking Table. We will have one of our pre-meeting games, with a great prize for the winner! Also, as usual, we'll have library disks and those great DVPC mugs (version 2) for sale, SIG news, and some of our usual great door prizes.

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President's Corner

by [Alan Mildwurm](#) DVPC

REMEMBER: OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JULY 11! And what a meeting it will be! We are pleased to announce our guest will be Chris Pirillo, host of TechTV's popular daily CALL FOR HELP show. Check out the show's website: www.techtv.com/callforhelp. Chris is also the founder of the equally popular Locker gnome website at www.lockergnome.com This is a great site filled with reams of interesting information and tips. Don't forget to sign up for the free newsletters! I am certain the July 11th meeting will be energetic, informative and fun!

I am trying to set up a number of meetings and am looking to invite individuals and companies who haven't presented to us before. If you have any suggestions or requests, let me know — otherwise we on the board will decide who comes!

I have just started playing with an interesting program — ArtIcons. This little jewel allows you to design your own icons. Check out www.aha-soft.com. The only drawback I have found is that I still can't draw. More to follow!

Have a great 4th!

Windows XP: As Good as it Gets by Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

Steve Bass discovers few crashes, great performance, and a minimum of headaches with XP Pro

Kvetching about an operating system is therapeutic. Believe me, I've done lots, saving regular visits to my shrink. But my complaining has almost bottomed out since I made the full-time switch to Windows XP Pro.

You caught that, right? I said almost. The reason is that even though I'm wildly pleased with XP, there are still a few features — and loose ends — I don't like. I'll describe a few of them in this and subsequent columns, and show you how XP has built-in ways to make the changes. (Of course, that's one of my primary kvetches — finding the spots to modify XP isn't obvious and requires digging.)

To play fair, I have to warn you that I'll also do some proselytizing. I'm going to do my best to win you over, so to speak, for your own good. That's because once you get over the hassle of Product Activation, and Microsoft's annoying single license policy, I really think your computing experience will increase substantially.

I need another soapbox minute or two. Many of the PC World letters I receive complain, sometime bitterly, of a Microsoft conspiracy to force you into upgrading your system. Readers go on to say that in order to use XP, they'll need to replace some of their devices (printers seem to be the first one not to work), or stop using old, 16-bit programs written for Win 95.

I'll concede and agree with many of the readers that Microsoft should have done a better job with previous Windows versions, then we wouldn't be stuck in the corner having to upgrade.

But the reality is that if you want a slick operating system, one that's likely to make your computing day smoother and your workday more productive, you'll have to upgrade. [Set Soapbox to Off].

No More Stinkin' Crashes

You probably know that XP is a pretty interface hung on Windows 2000's architecture, so it resists crashes extraordinarily well. That's true for XP but not necessarily for programs that still plow headfirst into the bit bucket. For instance, Eudora, my e-mail program, locks up when I try embedding what it considers a too large image into a message. And Internet Explorer also has a way of choking and freezing on some sites, doing its best to imitate a deer in headlights.

With Win 9x, the Eudora and IE crash could bring the system down; even if it didn't, I'd reboot to clear out any left-over holes in memory. Win XP contains the crash and stops it from contaminating the rest of the system. Using Control - Alt - Delete, the three-finger, soft-boot salute, calls up Task manager, one of XP's shining lights. Click on the toasted app and it's history.

Crash Reports? No, Thanks

Of course, with Microsoft at the helm, nothing as cool as Task Manager's handling of a crash can be left alone. Microsoft insists on meddling by sending itself the details of the crash. No doubt, the crash report does provide clues, often vital ones that you can review, to explain why a program crashes.

But once I've looked at a report — say, Eudora's paige32.dll bug that Qualcomm won't fix — I'm no longer interested in seeing it pop up. So I've turned parts of the feature off. (From Start, Control Panel, Advanced tab, Error Reporting.) This dialog gives me choices, and they're good ones. I can get the report but not send it, opt to hear only about programs or XP's errors, or even add specific programs to watch.

Zap, You're Restored

GoBack was the first successful utility to save snapshots of a PC's hard drive and let you restore the drive to a time when things were running well. It shouldn't surprise you to see a similar feature in Windows XP. (Roxio's *GoBack*, \$40, download at www.roxio.com.)

Quick aside: Many of Microsoft's niftier features are from the brain trusts of third-party companies. Woody, creator of dozens of Office, and specifically Word, add-ons, said that to me in a private e-mail recently.

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Windows XP: As Good as it Gets...

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XP's System Restore does just about everything *GoBack* does, just not as well. Nonetheless, it's an improvement over the way it worked in Windows ME, and a handy tool. I create a Restore point just before installing a new application. If the installation goes kablooey, I use System Restore to jump five minutes into the past and get my system going again.

I use it so often, I pinned it onto my Start Menu for easy access. Try it: Find System Restore in All Programs, Accessories, System Tools and right mouse click on the icon and choose Pin on Start menu. Easy, no?

System Restore's Problems

The problem? System Restore isn't perfect. While I haven't had a problem in the 25 times I've used it, some reports on the Internet talk about DLLs that should be gone after a System Restore, are still on the system.

One thing Microsoft doesn't tell you is that each Restore Point (and system checkpoints, those restore points XP does automatically) takes up disk space.

You can dump all but the last system point by using XP's Disk Cleanup tool. Open Disk Cleanup, by clicking Start, choose All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, select Disk Cleanup, and choose the More Options tab. (Shortcut: From Start, Run, type cleanmgr.)

In the next series of columns, I'll show you other features built into XP that can keep you focused on productivity rather than rebooting two or three times a day or recovering from crashes.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Check PCW's current edition at www.pcworld.com/resource/toc/index.asp and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at www.pcworld.com/bass_letter.

OmniPage Pro 11 Review by Karl Rehak, Las Vegas PC Users Group

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software has been around for many years. Anyone who has had a need to capture an existing document for revision knows the value in having this kind of product to remove much of the burden. A little background of my own experience with OCR software might be in order before beginning the review. I have been a user of this kind of software product for over five years. Starting with the light versions of OCR products with my first scanner followed by two releases of TextBridge. This my second experience with OmniPage Pro. The first OmniPage product I used was release 10.

My general opinion of OCR software is that while it removes most of the effort in capturing printed documents, the OCR process is in itself a very burdensome activity. The software is only capable of doing so much of the effort and any ambiguities in the OCR process requires interpretation that only a human being is capable of providing. As a result I haven't approached an OCR session with delight or as being an activity that would be personally rewarding. Additionally, my OCR sessions are generally infrequent and usually come in bursts that can range from several hours

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SIG News Compiled by [Nick Chase](#), SIG Coordinator, DVPC, 680-4211

Advanced Developers SIG [Ron Ogg](#), SIG Co-Leader – 415-281-0431

The Advanced Developers SIG is a learning co-op. Every month we choose a topic and let people know where they can learn about it. We then get together and go over the information. We hope that if everyone learns a little on their own, and when we get together everyone can learn a lot. If you are an advanced developer you are invited to join the ADSIG. Beginners will want to get some serious development experience before joining the SIG. See the ADSIG page on the DVPC web site at www.dvpc.org/clarion.html for meeting location, dates, and time.

Advanced Users SIG [Jeff and Sharon Noyer](#), SIG Co-Leaders – 778-4348

The Advanced Users SIG meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at 4208 Amargosa Drive in Antioch. Directions: Go east on Highway 4 through Antioch to the Hillcrest Avenue exit. At the light at the end of the exit ramp, go right onto Hillcrest Avenue, and then stay towards your left. At the 3rd light, Hillcrest Avenue turns to the left. Go left and stay on Hillcrest. (Landmark: "The Crossings" Shopping Center is at intersection). At the 4th light, go left onto Wildhorse Drive. (Landmark: 7-Eleven on corner at intersection). At the 2nd left turn, go left onto Meadow Lake Drive. At the 4th right turn, go right onto Amargosa Drive. 4208 Amargosa Drive is the 3rd house on your right, blue and white one-story. The Advanced Users SIG is for anyone interested in discussing advanced topics such as hardware and software issues, cutting-edge technologies, networking, Windows NT Server and Workstation, troubleshooting, etc. Please join us to participate in this very informative and educational forum. We hope to see you at the meeting!

Genealogy eSIG [Peggy Johnson](#), SIG Leader – 676-7522

The DVPC Genealogy SIG is a group of computer genealogists who share helpful websites, databases and source information found on the internet. It's an opportunity for members seeking help to put forth a question or problem to the SIG and receive suggestions and advice. When you locate a useful website, database or visit a research facility, please email the group of the details so we also can take advantage of this information. If you wish to be included in this Genealogy SIG, please email Peggy Johnson, pegszone@aol.com.

Education and Entertainment SIG [Alan Mildwurm](#) SIG Leader – 510-770-5770

The Education & Entertainment SIG usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Montevideo School in San Ramon at 7:30 p.m. Check the DVPC web site (www.dvpc.org) for information about each month's meeting. The E&E SIG is oriented to exploring the best in education and entertainment software for the PC. Come back in the fall when everyone is invited to attend our meetings, and bring your kids along - they'll have a great time, too! Directions for our next meetings: Take 680 to Bollinger Canyon Road, go west to San Ramon Valley Blvd., go south to Montevideo Rd. and turn left. Proceed east on Montevideo about 3 blocks to Broadmoor and turn left. The school is 1 block on the right. We meet in Room 22.

Internet SIG [Craig Peterson](#), SIG Leader – 671-7025

The Internet SIG usually meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at Computer Renaissance, 959 Contra Costa Blvd. in Pleasant Hill. However, this month due to a change in schedule we will be meeting on the fourth Wednesday for this month only. We cover everything about the Internet, from browsing and e-mail to creating your own web site and the tools for doing so. For more information, please call Craig Peterson at (925) 671-7025 or e-mail him at compmail@pacbell.net.

July is a great month to travel and see "what is out there". We will be taking a look at how the web helps travelers, both before you go on a trip and while you are out and about. Hope to see you all on **July 24th**.

.NET SIG [Ted Armstrong](#), SIG Leader – 939-5874

The .NET SIG has its meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room at Concord

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SIG News...

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Police Department building (see directions in the Windows SIG announcement below). The SIG is dedicated to the new Microsoft .NET development tools, the newest Microsoft standard for developing cross-platform stand-alone and web-site applications. .NET tools include Microsoft Visual Basic .NET, Microsoft Visual C++ .NET, and Microsoft Visual C#. .NET developers can take advantage of a common toolbox, debugger, and task window, greatly reducing the developer learning curve and ensuring that developers can always choose the language most appropriate for their task and expertise. .NET gives developers the tools for integrating solutions across operating systems and languages. The .NET SIG will provide an opportunity for .NET developers at all levels who live or work in the East Bay to network with fellow developers. The SIG will provide speakers on different .NET topics. If you or anyone you know could benefit from this SIG, please come to our meetings. Contact Ted Armstrong at ted1003@yahoo.com for more information.

New Users SIG [Bill Earl](#), SIG Leader – 939-5874

The New Users SIG holds its meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to the regular DVPC monthly meeting on the first Thursday of each month at Bank of America building B. We discuss whatever is confusing or puzzling new PC users. If you are a new user of PCs who would like to meet with other new users — and some experienced users who can answer your questions as well — then join us at the New Users SIG meetings at 6:30 p.m. prior to each DVPC monthly meeting.

PC 101 SIG [Craig Peterson](#), SIG Leader – 671-7025

PC 101 (a class on how to use the computer) is on vacation until the **fall**. When we resume, we'll again have classes on the Saturday following the general meeting at 1:00 p. m. at the Community Room of the Concord Police Station, 1350 Galindo Street, in Concord (see directions in the Windows SIG announcement below). The classes will start at 1:00 pm and end at 3:00. Join us in the fall for some hands on, one-on-one help with the nuts and bolts of using computers. Those in the class enjoy the extra time we can devote to each problem, as well as the time to answer questions in class.

Windows SIG [Ron Ogg](#) (415-281-0431) and [Walt Parsons](#) (934-0775), SIG Co-Leaders

The Windows SIG meets at the Community Room at the Concord Police Department building on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. We discuss the latest version of Windows, demonstrate interesting shareware and freeware, and have random access sessions where we all try to answer SIG members' questions. Everyone who uses, is interested in, or is curious about Windows on their PC is invited to attend.

Directions: The Concord Police Department is at 1350 Galindo Street in Concord. From the 242 Freeway take Clayton Road east to Galindo and turn right; the Police Department building is 3 blocks south on your left. From Highway 24 take Monument Blvd. east and continue on Monument Blvd. to where it changes to Galindo; the Police Department building will be on your right a short distance past the signal at Cowell Road.

OmniPage Pro 11 Review...

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to several days. This means that ease of use is important and the more accurate an OCR program is, the easier will be my brief but intense excursions into their use.

OmniPage Pro release 11 is the first release since Caere was bought and ScanSoft merged their OmniPage OCR program into the TextBridge product. This is also the first new release from ScanSoft in just under two years. Needless to say, and based on my past use of OCR products, I was very interested to see what has been brought to the scene. First and foremost is the claim that the product is more accurate than preceding products and my first question — what does that really mean to me? A feature called IntelliTrain has been enhanced and once again the question —

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DVPC Board Meeting Minutes

by [Tom Krauss](#), DVPC

Your Board of Directors held their meeting on June 12 without benefit of either of our capable secretaries: the Board Secretary, Tom Krauss, and the Membership Secretary, Peggy Johnson. We were expecting Peggy's absence, since she was on vacation. But Tom was supposed to be at the meeting to record the exciting happenings, and present them to the membership in a manner which all would have been able to understand in the tome you are holding in your hands or viewing on the DVPC web site (www.dvpc.org) even now. The longer we waited for Tom's appearance the more obvious it became that his absence was permanent, and the colder the pizza became, so we gave up and dined.

Here, in Tom's own words, sent by smoke signals, is the harrowing tale of what actually happened to him and why he was among the missing:

The June DVPC Board of Directors meeting may have been exciting, action-packed, ground-breaking and a cure for insomnia – but I doubt it. Past experience leads me to believe it was none of the above. Unfortunately, I wasn't there, so I can't say for sure.

No, I was having fun with General Motors.

In March I bought an eight-month-old Buick LeSabre. My 1986 Oldsmobile had 317,000 miles on it, and the last time I took it to my mechanic he made it clear that it was not going to get any cheaper to run. So I broke down and bought the Buick.

Tuesday afternoon on the 4th of June I was driving through Sonora, CA on my way home from a long weekend in the mountains when in the space of six or seven miles my new Buick went from making a funny noise when shifting to making a lot of noise all the time to no transmission at all. I had it towed to the dealer in Jamestown. Under the manufacturer's warranty I was entitled to and received a free rental car until mine was fixed. So we stayed an extra night, then came home Wednesday in the rental.

I called the dealer Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, but they hadn't looked at my car yet. Monday morning they were "looking at it now". That afternoon they called to say they had ordered a new transmission which would arrive and be installed Tuesday. They would call me on Tuesday to confirm when it would be ready. I told them that I couldn't get away until the afternoon of Wednesday the 13th. They told me if I didn't return the rental car Tuesday, the day my car would be ready, I would have to pay an extra day rental. I told them that since they had had my car four full work days and a weekend before deciding what to do, I expected them to pay for the extra day. After much agonizing and checking with the manager, they agreed to pay for one extra day, but I definitely had to make it to Jamestown Wednesday by 7:00 p.m.

So I missed the Board meeting, but got my car with a new transmission (after 27,000 miles!) and it didn't cost me anything except time and some extra gas. And that would be the end of my sad story, except I mentioned this incident to my mechanic and he asked if I had the warranty for the new transmission (they come from the factory with a 5 year, 50,000 mile warranty).

Well, no, I didn't. So I called the dealer in Jamestown and learned something very interesting (and depressing). It seems that when GM replaces a transmission under their factory warranty, the warranty on the new transmission is only for one year or 12,000 miles, even though it is straight from the factory. But if the owner pays for the new transmission, it has a 5 year 50,000 mile warranty! I may have misunderstood something here. It certainly doesn't make sense to me. So I wrote a letter to CEO of General Motors. I'm sure he will explain this to me...

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OmniPage Pro 11 Review...

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what does that mean to me? Again, because of the intense interaction during OCR sessions, those were the two most significant areas of evaluation to me. Several other new and enhanced features were evaluated as the product was tested and comments regarding their value will be discussed through the review.

The bottom line measure of the value of a quality OCR product is end user productivity. As the quality of OCR products improves and the interpretation of a document's content becomes more and more a function of the computer's ability to interpret information rather than the time spent to have a human being interpret and make decisions, the higher the productivity. That is, in the final analysis, all that matters. So along the way judgments of the OmniPage improvements on user productivity will be highlighted.

The Test Begins

The first test was done primarily to allow me to gain knowledge and confidence in the use of OmniPage 11. I read the instruction manual and reviewer's notes and formulated a test plan to put the product through its paces, but first I had to know what capability was in the software. For this first test I used the documents out of the OmniPage box. The documents are very legible and of a standard size font, about 12 point Ariel. I rated each test based on the overall quality and legibility of the source document, a 10 is a very easy document and a 1 is an extremely poor quality document. These first test documents were quality 10.

The overall design of the main OmniPage Pro OCR process is built upon the age-old concept of what computing really is. The steps are Input, Process and Output — a simple concept. Add into that each of those processes can be broadly segregated into three different approaches. They can be done manually, automatically or described through a wizard. I tried each method as I tested and found that they are very similar and easy to learn and use. It takes no additional effort to move from one approach to another.

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Email Meeting Notification Available

We're providing an Email Notification service for the DVPC monthly meeting, and for SIGs as well, for all current, paid-up members. If you're interested in receiving an email message announcing each monthly meeting, and for the SIGs you attend, fill out this form and mail to the address on page 16 of this copy of *Diablo Blue*. Note that there's no separate notification for the New Users SIG since it's held on the same night as the monthly meeting.

Send me Email notification of each monthly DVPC meeting and these SIGs:

Name _____

Email Address: _____

Advanced Users SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	.NET SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced Developers SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Users SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and Entertainment SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	PC 101 SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genealogy eSIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	Windows SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet SIG	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

OmniPage Pro 11 Review...

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The input describes the source of the OCR, it can be a black and white, grayscale or color document. It can also be a computer file. Introduced with this release is a scanable file type, Acrobat files. More on the PDF scanning ability will be covered later.

The process part of the three elements allows the user to describe what he or she wants as a result. Among the choices are to preserve the page structure of the source, scan it as a single continuous column of information, include or exclude tables or to output to a spreadsheet format. The program also recognizes over 100 different languages.

Finally, the output function allows the user to save the information as a file for a word processor or other computer program, output to mail or copy the output to the clipboard. There was another interesting output available — speech. More on that later.

The first scans from the manuals went as expected. It interpreted everything with only three suspect words in three

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Switch to the Diablo Blue Web Edition

"I am a real computer person and as such recognize the ultimate reality of the 'Paperless Society'. In keeping with this spirit and in an effort to help DVPC reduce overhead costs, I say "Nay" to a written newsletter. Give it to me electronically, I want to get my copy of DVPC's Diablo Blue off the Web. (I can always print it out on blue paper and don't even have to admit that I did!)" Turn in this form at the monthly meeting or email to: nopaper@dvpc.org

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Also notify me about these SIGs:

Bring a Friend to a DVPC Meeting
Help Them Grow their PC Knowledge
Help Grow DVPC Membership

OmniPage Pro 11 Review...

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pages of scanning. A word with a registration mark (® the circle R) next to it is a example of a suspect word. I guessed correctly and I only had to confirm the program's choice. The interpret rating was 100% and again, the document type was a 10.

Test Two

Alright, the parties over, time to see just what this program can do. For second test I selected a sampling of a legal document, reproduced many many times, originally bound in a plastic binder with half inch slots, later converted to three hole punched paper. The document because of numerous copies over the years was heavily speckled. I called it the document from hell. This is characteristic of many of the scans I had done in the past and where the personal productivity factor went in the dumper. Lots of interpretation needed and in the older OCR programs the remnants of holes and slots were interpreted as characters. The documents also had to be cleaned of speckles and marks manually with older OCR programs. Further the document had a number stamped on it of a different size and slant. Document quality 2 at best on my scale, I decided to name this part of the test 'Extreme Scanning.'

Four pages were scanned and the overall scan accuracy was 93.93%. On the first page it highlighted 17 words. Of the selections it had guessed correctly 15 times and I had only to confirm the choice. I had to select from a provided list of choices twice, and the correct words were in the list.

I'm convinced that lawyers invent words so nobody knows what they are talking about. The net in the OCR test was that the document was loaded with legalese and OmniPage Pro flew through the legal words just fine.

The additional pages had slightly less selections to decide, apparently the IntelliScan feature was doing its job. The parts of the documents that contained remnants of holes and slots were passed over by the program, no need to clean them beforehand or eliminate wrong interpretations on the part of OmniPage.

Its beginning to get too easy for this program (and me), so for the final scan of the legal document I decided to place it in the scanner at about a 10 degree angle. It scanned fine. The program automatically aligns the text. When I took the document off of the scanner I realized I had also put it in upside down. The program had also fixed that. I became a believer.

At this point I was sold, the effect on my overall productivity in the OCR area was great. No more speckle and hole removal or spending countless hours interpreting information. But I figured there had to be one more test I could do.

Test Three

I had achieved my goal of watching the program pass the extreme scanning test, but what else would put it to the test after that? Looking over my bookshelf I saw an old copy of the Bible. The pages are 4½ inches wide and 7½ inches long, the font was too small for me to measure but is about 7 point or less. Lots of unusual words, numbered verses and italicized footnotes. I placed it on the scanner at a 10-degree angle and hit the scan button. The result was 100% accuracy, 13 suspect words and no changes. On the scale of document quality I put it at about a 6.

I'm amazed at this performance and now we're in bonus territory in our extreme scanning test.

The Bonus Round

Added to the program with this release is the ability to OCR Acrobat files. To do this test I found a 'readme' file in my Acrobat folder and scanned it in. It is a 21-page file and all 11,000+ words were input at 100% accuracy with 64 suspect words. Again, the registration symbol and similar characters required confirmation that the interpretation was correct. No changes had to be made.

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Get Involved! Learn! Join a SIG today!

OmniPage Pro 11 Review...

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Added to this release is voice output. I had a lot of fun with this. There are a variety of voice types but the one that was easiest for me to hear was called "Sam." Sam sounds like Steven Hawking. What is the value of this you ask? If you hold the original in your hands, the voice will read what it has and you can do a word-by-word review of captured information. Sam will not have much of a career as a stand up comic, but he can come in handy. Personally, I doubt that Sam will have a serious place in my OCR activity, when the OCR process is done I have a very high level of confidence that it is correct and the voice read back is a redundant activity. Perhaps future releases will find more for Sam to do.

The program supports over 100 languages however, Chinese, Japanese and Hebrew are not among them.

Conclusion

All in all ScanSoft has delivered a product matched to its promise. The product is more accurate than previous releases and is easy to use. As each release improves accuracy, the user productivity soars, I would estimate that productivity improvements of an order of magnitude over previous releases can be realized. What used to take 10 hours of effort can now be done in 1 hour. The more complex the document and the poorer the condition the more work the current program will take on, relieving much of the effort of capturing documents.

The program test was a lot of fun to do. The burden of Optical Character Recognition has been lightened. ScanSoft has delivered a significant release and OmniPage Pro release 11 is its name.

Potpourri *by Dick Curry, DVPC*

I have been a subscriber to ExtremeTech's e-mail services since its inception about a year ago. ExtremeTech is a service of the Ziff Davis group of companies. It provides, at no charge, articles relating to computer and digital technical. Just recently they have added a link to an index of many of the technical articles that have been made available since its inception. This includes over 220 articles and 1.1 million words. This link can be found at www.extremetech.com/article2/0,3973,41558,00.asp. At the moment it can also be found on ExtremeTech's home page at www.extremetech.com/ (link to ExtremeTech At A Glance). If you enjoy reading articles relating to computer technology you have got to give this site a try.

The 50 most incredibly useful websites? This might be an overstatement but Yahoo Internet Life has a list of some very interesting websites. To check it out go to:

<http://eletters1.ziffdavis.com/cgi-bin10/flo?y=aQvROCzAqIOHHQ0oHR0Ac>.

I know its a long URL, but that's the way it was given to me. You can also find a link to this page at www.yil.com

(Continued on page 11)

Special Raffle Promotion

Bring a guest to a DVPC meeting, you get 10 Raffle tickets!

If your guest joins at the meeting, you get 10 Raffle tickets –
and your new member guest also gets 10 Raffle tickets!!

Potpourri...

(Continued from page 10)

under Feature stories from the latest issue.

I am presently reading a new paperback book (8" x 10") called How Computers Work, Sixth Edition, by Ron White. This book has about 500 pages of excellent material on how and why a PC computer works. It covers everything - boot-up, software, hardware, microchips, data processing and storage, I/O devices, multimedia, etc. It is written by a very knowledgeable geek in everyperson's language. The sixth edition has just been released so this book covers up through Windows 2000 and XP. It's available from www.amazon.com for \$24.49 and this includes a CD that includes a virtual reality walk-around tour inside your computer with the author as your guide.

Its easy to get into a rut with your computer utilization. Same old apps; same old websites. Do at least one thing new this month.

Computer Sex by [Walt Parsons](#), DVPC

A language teacher was explaining to her class that in French nouns, unlike their English counterparts, are grammatically designated as masculine or feminine

A puzzled student asked, "What is the gender of a computer?"

The teacher did not know, and the word was not in her French dictionary, so for fun she split the class in two groups - appropriately enough, by gender - and asked them to decide whether "computer" should be a masculine or a feminine noun. Both groups were required to give four reasons for their recommendation.

The boy's group decided that "computer" should definitely be of the feminine gender because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.

The girl's group concluded that computers should be masculine because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and

As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

[Are you just a little bit disappointed? You really thought this article (by DVPC's Official Curmudgeon) was going to be something naughty based on its title, didn't you? Tsk, tsk! - Editor]



Get a Friend to Join DVPC!

Ten Years Ago by Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

A look back at a column that describes the process of getting a new hard disk--in 1992

Here's a quiz: Why is upgrading your IBM PC like going to the dentist? It's not — going to the dentist is a lot more fun.

It's no joke. I hate upgrading because it's a day of tinkering with the insides of my computer. But I had to get a larger hard disk because I switched to Windows. Applications written for Windows take up humongous amounts of hard disk space and there's little chance that the trend will stop. Microsoft's Word for Windows, for example, gobbles up 12 megabytes and Corel Draw takes about 14 megabytes.

Most users have hard disks ranging in size from the older 30 megabyte (the one I'm still using) to about 200 megabytes. Larger sizes are available and many people are looking towards the future, buying disks as big as 384MBs. I predict that within two years, 1 gigabyte disks (that's 1000 megabytes) will be on many machines. But for now — with hard disks dropping in price — I recommend a minimum 200MB hard disk on a new system or 120MB on an upgrade.

There's more than one way to add a new hard disk and how you do it depends on your budget and your existing system. Quantum's Plus Hardcard is not the least expensive but it is the quickest, easiest way to upgrade. For about \$400, you get 105MBs of disk storage on an add-in card — and no installation hassles. Putting in the Hardcard will take less than fifteen minutes from start to finish.

A friend of mine chose a neat alternative and upgraded with a Bernoulli storage device. Instead of a "fixed" disk — one that stays in the computer — Bernoulli lets you remove their 90MB disk. The internal Bernoulli drive is discounted to under \$800 and is a good solution as you can buy more disks (at about \$150 each) when your storage needs increase. My friend keeps Windows applications on one disk, shareware on another and DOS programs on a third. You're also able to move the data to another computer via the portable disk, an added benefit.

The traditional upgrade path is to add a hard disk to your existing system which means the drive you purchase must match the controller card that's already plugged into one of your system's expansion slots. Older machines usually have an RLL or MFM interface but newer machines come with faster IDE (integrated drive electronics) controllers, the current standard. Most controller cards manage up to two hard disks along with the two floppy drives. Some IDEs include parallel and serial ports used to attach modems and printers.

If you have an IDE controller, I recommend you stay with it. On one IDE machine, I upgraded and choose a fast Conner hard disk because of their reputation for long life expectancy and fast access time. Their 120MB model (CP30104) will set you back about \$400 and their 212MB (model CP320) is about \$560.

Macintosh owners, however, have a secret recently available to IBMs: Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) adapters. SCSI, pronounced "scuzzy," lets you attach up to seven devices onto one internal controller card. If you're upgrading a hard disk and think you may want a CD ROM player (also called a reader) in the near future, consider the SCSI adapter. You can daisy chain the hard disk, CD ROM player, a tape backup and up to four peripherals.

Adaptec's fast SCSI adapter, the one I'm using, even lets you connect up to two floppy drives, a valuable addition. If you choose to upgrade with SCSI, make sure you check with the hard disk manufacturer to see which controller cards are compatible. I tried the Adaptec with a Conner SCSI drive and had no problems. If you run into trouble, get in touch with CORELSCSI, a Canadian company that supplies special software for a wide array of SCSI devices.

While SCSI offers faster access and more flexibility, it isn't for everyone. On uncomplicated home machines, upgrading to SCSI should present no problem and you can likely do it yourself. But in business settings — especially if you're on a network — you may need to hire a technician for help.

So what will it be: upgrade or go to the dentist? I'll let you make your own decision. I've already made mine.

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Check PCW's current edition at www.pcworld.com/resource/toc/index.asp and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at www.pcworld.com/bass_letter.

Give a DVPC Membership Gift Certificate!

July Not-a-Crossword Puzzle by [Craig Peterson](#), DVPC*July's Puzzle is "SCHOOL IS OUT, SO WHY AM I HAVING THIS DREAM?"*

Ok, not all of us are phobic about math (particularly conversions from one base to another) but many users of the computer are. As a special "summer school" treat we have a math quiz for you this month. If you need some help, you could try computer dictionary (either online or at the library), or you can switch your calculator (we're not talking about a pocket calculator, folks – think about it!) into each of these modes as you enter values, or you can check out the answers at www.dvpc.org/solution.html.

Note that this *isn't* a crossword puzzle. Don't look for the clues – there aren't any. It's a *math* puzzle. So dust off your little calculator accessory (hint, hint), give it a try, and have fun!

Conversions:

Each problem has three lines of numbers, decimal, binary, and hexadecimal. You are given one number in each line. Convert each number into the other two bases, solve the problem, and provide the answer in all three bases.

	<i>Decimal</i>	<i>Binary</i>	<i>Hex</i>		<i>Decimal</i>	<i>Binary</i>	<i>Hex</i>
A)	1	_____	–	B)	–	_____	2
+	–	0010	–	+	–	0100	–
+	–	_____	3	+	6	_____	–
<hr/>				<hr/>			
C)	–	0010	–	D)	–	0000	–
+	–	0101	–	+	–	0111	–
+	7	_____	–	+	–	1000	–
<hr/>				<hr/>			

Linked Pages Won't Open in a New IE Window by [Ron Ogg](#), DVPC

I've recently encountered the following problem with Internet Explorer 5.5 and 6.0:

When clicking a link that opens a page in a new browser window, the page contents are not displayed but "Done" is displayed in the status bar at the bottom of the browser window.

I'm not sure what's causing the problem, but it's happening on a PC at home running Windows XP Pro and IE 6.0, and at work on a PC running Windows 98 and IE 5.5. Here's the solution that I've found that solves this problem:

Close all open programs.

Click on Start and select Run from the pop-up menu.

Type the following:

```
regsvr32 urlmon.dll
```

and press Enter.

You should see a dialog box that tells you that the file has been registered successfully. Click OK. Pages will now open in a new Internet Explorer browser window when you click on a link on another web page.

Diablo Blue Article and Ad Information

Diablo Blue needs articles from the members of DVPC. See your name in print! Achieve fame and fortune! (Well, maybe just some limited fame in Contra Costa County...) We are particularly interested in product and book reviews and articles about your PC experiences.

Commercial advertising is available in Diablo Blue. Prices are \$75 for a full page, \$40 for a half page, and \$25 for a quarter page for one insertion — or get three consecutive insertions for the price of two. For more information, call editor Ronald Ogg, at 415-281-0431 (days). Members of DVPC can submit personal classified ads that will be printed in Diablo Blue for three insertions at no charge. The rules are simple: up to 9 lines (as we typeset it), material must be suitable for publication (the editor is the sole judge of suitability), the member must be in good standing (current dues paid), and ad space is available on a first-come first-served space available basis only. If you want fewer than three insertions note that on your ad copy. If members want their business card reproduced, the rate is \$10 for one insertion, or \$25 for three insertions. The card must be horizontal and must be scannable.

Send your articles or member ad copy as email attachments to the [Newsletter Editor](#). See the deadline information in the Calendar on page 16 of each issue of Diablo Blue.

DVPC on the Internet

DVPC has a web site on the Internet — thanks to our Web Team: Ron Ogg and Stan Umlauft. You can surf your way to our own domain and home page by starting your favorite Web browser and typing the following URL; be sure to save it in your browser's hotlist so you don't have to type it each time: www.dvpc.org.

DVPC Officers and Directors

Alan Mildwurm, President/Programs 510-770-5770 (work)

Nicholas Chase, SIG Coordinator 680-4211 (home)

Will Crites, Publicity 938-1291 (home)

Charlie Crothers, At Large 829-2237 (home)

Dick Curry, At Large 376-5541 (home)

Peggy Johnson, Membership Secretary 676-7522 (home)

Tom Krauss, Secretary 689-9960 (home)

Jessica Mildwurm, Treasurer 829-5858 (home)

Ron Ogg, Newsletter Editor 415-281-0431 (work)

Craig Peterson, Librarian 671-7025 (home)

Stan Umlauft, Web Site 458-5560 (home)

The Board of Directors usually meets the week following the general meeting. Check the DVPC Calendar on page 16 of each issue of Diablo Blue, or the DVPC home page on the Internet (www.dvpc.org) for the meeting date, time, and location. You can reach any of the officers and directors by talking to them at the DVPC monthly meeting, by email to bod@value.net, or leaving a message on the DVPC voicemail System.

DVPC Voice Mail System

DVPC has a computer -based voice mail system. The phone number for the DVPC VMS is 925-556-1449. Hear up-to-date information about monthly and SIG meetings, information about DVPC for potential new members, and a message center for Board of Directors members and SIG Leaders.

Diablo Blue is the monthly newsletter of the Diablo Valley PC Users' Group.
Editor: Ronald Ogg, Mailing: Peggy Johnson

Support DVPC — Get a friend to join!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Enclose a check for \$30.00 for one year's dues with printed edition of *Diablo Blue*, or \$25.00 for one year's dues with access to the Internet edition of *Diablo Blue* (\$20.00 for students who must enclose a copy of current Student ID), made payable to **DVPC** and mail to: DVPC User's Group, PO Box 3244, San Ramon, CA 94583

Renewal _____ New Member _____ Referred by current member? Name _____

Name: _____

Company/School: _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

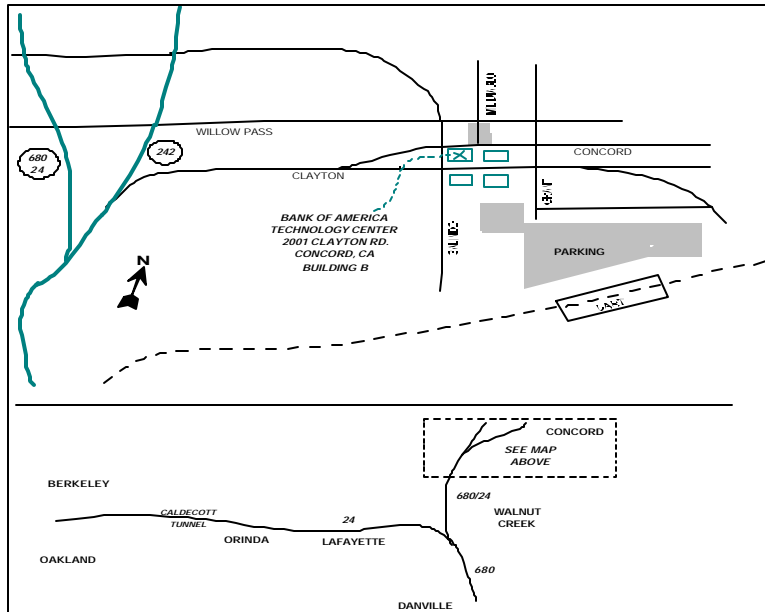
On occasion DVPC publishes a list of members for distribution to DVPC members only. Please check how you would like to be listed: **No listing** _____ **List Name and Home** _____ **Work** _____ **phone number(s)** _____

I'm also interested in these SIGs: _____

Directions to Bank of America Building B in Concord

Take the Clayton Road exit off of the 242 Freeway, and go east on Clayton Road. After about 1½ miles you'll come to Galindo, and you'll see the Bank of America complex of four high-rise buildings. Enter the door on the east side near the southeast corner of the building. Building B is the first building on your left, at the northeast corner of Clayton and Galindo. Parking: Turn right on Grant Street (the first block past Galindo), then right into the BART parking lot at the back of the BofA complex. Or turn left on Galindo then right onto Concord Avenue to find street parking.

Be sure to observe parking regulations! Concord parking officers are very efficient!



DVPC July 2002 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Windows SIG 7:30 p.m.	2	3	4 July 4th Holiday Meeting moved to July 11 this month only	5	6 PC 101 SIG On Summer Vacation
8	9	10	11 DVPC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. New User's SIG 6:30 p.m.	12	13
15 Genealogy eSIG See SIG News on page 4	16	17 DVPC Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Alan Mildwurm's house	18 Advanced Users SIG 7:30 p.m. Advanced Developers SIG 7:00 p.m. NET SIG 7:30 p.m.	19	20 Diablo Blue deadline: Email articles and ads to the Editor: rogg@valve.net
22	23	24 Internet SIG (this month only!) 7:00 p.m. Education & Entertainment SIG 7:30 p.m.	25	26	27
29 See SIG News starting on page 4 for more information about SIG meeting dates, times, topics, and locations	30	31			

TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Diablo Valley PC User's Group
PO Box 3244
San Ramon, CA 94583