

Got Questions?



VERMONT COMPUTING INC.

Email us and we might feature your question in the newsletter!

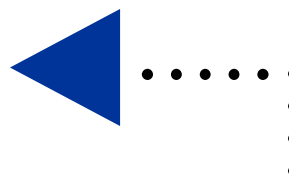
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Take one!



Store Hours: Mon – Fri 8:00 – 6:00 Sat & Sun 10:00 – 12:00

Join the VCI Team!



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Newsletter

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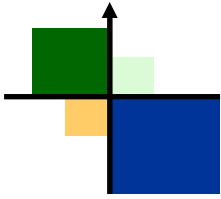
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VERMONT COMPUTING, INC.

VCI NEWS

Join the Vermont Computing Team!

We are now hiring for a technician.

Job duties will include but not limited to providing support to individuals and businesses, at our location and their's. Hardware and software repair and support, training, networking and consulting.

Requirements: Knowledge of all windows operating systems, basic networking, virus/spyware diagnosis and removal. Knowledge of computer hardware, peripherals and the ability to work as a team player or independently from a task list.

Pay Range: \$12.00 to \$25.00 Productivity incentive pay.

Regular Full-time position

Other Benefits: 401k plan, tuition reimbursement, company vehicle, employee discount with pay-over-time option and company matched IRA.

Back to School Specials!

Keep an eye out for back-to-school deals and special-bundles from Vermont Computing!

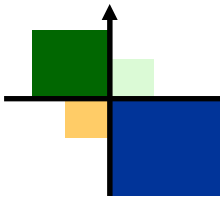
Great deals on laptops and other necessities for the student headed back to school. Coming soon!

Don't forget to check out www.buyavcpc.com or our main site www.vermontcomputing.com when you are considering the purchase of a new PC.

Also on the website, we have **VCI t-shirts and merchandise!** In association with CafePress, Vermont Computing is now offering fine Vermont Computing gear.



Proceeds will be donated to a **non-profit organization**. Head on over to gear.vermontcomputing.com to pick up some VCI merchandise today.



TECH TIPS

Reset Internet Explorer's window size in Windows XP

If in Windows XP you typically maximize a too-small Internet Explorer window, every subsequent time you launch Internet Explorer, its windows may remain too small. By default, Internet Explorer is supposed to open at the same size it was at the last time it was closed; however, sometimes the default setting gets out of whack, and you need to manually reset it. Here's how:

1. Launch Internet Explorer.
2. Click one of the window corners and drag it out to completely fill your screen. Do not use the Maximize button.
3. Press [Alt] to view the menu bar (if you are using Internet Explorer 7).
4. Press and hold down either [Ctrl] or [Shift] while selecting Exit from the File menu. Do not use the Close button.

Now when you launch Internet Explorer, it should open in a full window. If it opens in the same small window, repeat the steps but hold down the opposite key in step 4, that is either [Ctrl] or [Shift].

Note: This tip applies to both Windows XP Home and Windows XP Professional. As this is a function of Windows XP, it will work on all versions of IE.

PERIPHERALS

Magnetic "avalanches" could harm hard drives

<http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20070724-magnetic-avalanches-could-harm-hard-drives.html>

Avalanches are normally something you only worry about when you are lost in snowy mountains or when coming home from vacation and dealing with your junk mail. But researchers studying hard drive technologies have recently discovered that "magnetic avalanches" may pose a serious threat to data stored on rapidly-spinning drives. Joshua Deutsch, a physics professor at the University of California-Santa Cruz (go Banana Slugs!), and Andreas Berger of Hitachi Global Storage Technologies, reported the effect in the Physical Review Letters on July 13.

Hard drives store data by magnetizing small clusters-called domains-of atoms that sit on rapidly-spinning platters. The magnetic effect is created when an external magnetic field aligns the rotation and spin of electrons in the atom. While the spin of an electron is not physically the same as that of a rotating body such as a planet or top, scientists have found that it can exhibit similar characteristics. One of these is precession, the wobbling effect seen in spinning tops as they lose energy, and the cause of a 25,765-year cycle on Earth that slowly changes the direction of the north and south axis.

Electrons that have their spin direction modified exhibit precession effects for a few nanoseconds, before they settle down and continue their quantum mechanical life-

styles. However, during this period of precession, the electrons can exert forces on neighboring atoms that could cause those atoms' electrons to flip spins as well, triggering an "avalanche" of bit-flipping that only dies down due to the damping effect of the physical material on the platter.

As PC World noted, Deutsch and Berger's letter suggests that today's hard drives are mostly immune to runaway avalanches because of this damping effect, something achieved by trial and error over the years as manufacturers found out what materials made for reliable hard drives. However, as drive storage densities continue to increase, the problem could start to reassert itself unless more research is done to find the best materials for damping magnetic avalanches.

Curing "sender's remorse" (and screw-ups) with self-destructing e-mail

<http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20070723-curing-senders-remorse-and-screw-ups-with-self-destructing-e-mail.html>

Everyone has had one of those moments when you realize that you shouldn't have sent that e-mail. Maybe you sent it out of anger (or drunkenness), it was sent to the wrong person (that was not supposed to go to the boss!), or it was just plain incomplete. A recently announced e-mail service called BigString hopes to eliminate sender's remorse by offering users a way to send "self-destructing,



recallable e-mail."...

BigString has three tiers of service: a free, web-based account, a premium account with POP3 access, and a business account that can send from corporate e-mail addresses. Through the service, users can specify any number of criteria by which the message might expire: it can expire automatically after a certain number of minutes, it can expire after a certain number of times the recipient has opened the e-mail, or it can simply be set to be "recallable," so that the message will no longer be accessible whenever the sender feels like deeming it so.

But how is it possible? E-mail messages sent through BigString are actually encoded into images that are hosted off of BigString's servers and linked in an e-mail to the recipient. This not only makes it difficult for the recipient to copy and paste the content of the message, it also makes it easy for BigString to track how many times the image been viewed, how long it has been on the server, and whether it's been viewed by people at different IP addresses (to prevent forwarding of the message)...

BigString also offers several other features with its e-mail packages. For example, users can track when and how many times a message has been viewed and edit sent e-mails for typos or corrections (which updates the image on the server). There are several annoyances with using BigString, however, as it practically removes all searchability of the e-mails you send...

But for the uber-paranoid who are willing to annoy their friends, BigString's services do offer the ability to virtually turn back time and take back words sent by mistake. "[E]veryone from executives to job seekers to college students to online daters will have the luxury of being able to correct and retract emails that may have typos or other errors, or were sent in anger, haste or an altered state," said BigString CEO Darin Myman upon the launch of BigString 3.0. "Our service gives the sender total control, so they do not have to worry that their personal videos, photos or messages are being indiscriminately bounced around cyberspace, ending up on Web sites for the whole world to see."

Security firm discovers severe iPhone Safari exploit

<http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20070723-security-firm-discovers-severe-iphone-safari-exploit.html>

Security firm Independent Security Evaluators has announced a proof-of-concept exploit for Safari on the iPhone that, when executed, can transmit personal data from the iPhone to attackers. When a user navigates to a page with malicious code, data such as text messages (along with full text and phone numbers), voicemails, and contacts can be transmitted back to the attacker.

The exploit took about two weeks of part-time work to discover, according to ISE's web site...

ISE has provided some details (but not a step-by-step walk-through) on the exploit, pointing out that an attacker-controlled WiFi access point could be all that's needed to get through the security hole. This is the method used in the video provided on the site to show the exploit in action-the user thinks that he or she is visiting a trusted site like the New York Times, but instead the hacker has redirected that URL to another site with the mali-

cious code embedded in it.

...ISE notified Apple of the discovery over the weekend, along with a recommendation for a security patch. "Apple takes security very seriously and has a great track record of addressing potential vulnerabilities before they can affect users," Apple spokesperson Lynn Fox told the New York Times in response to the news. "We're looking into the report submitted by I.S.E. and always welcome feedback on how to improve our security."

The ISE team wants to make sure that iPhone owners know that they are still relatively safe..."Anything as complex as a computer-which is what this phone is-is going to have vulnerabilities," ISE founder Aviel Rubin said to the New York Times. The group advises that if iPhone users keep some basic security measures in mind when using the device, they should be just fine: only join protected WiFi networks that you trust, only visit sites that you trust, and don't open links embedded in e-mails.

Search privacy gets hot: Microsoft and Ask.com tag-team

<http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20070723-search-privacy-gets-hot-microsoft-and-ask-com-tag-team.html>

Microsoft has announced that it will change its current web search privacy policies in response to concern over online privacy and advertising industry consolidation...

Henceforth, Microsoft will make all Windows Live Search data anonymous after 18 months "unless the company receives user consent for a longer time period," according to the company. The policy will be retroactive and will apply to all Microsoft search portals worldwide. Customer search data will also be stored differently than data explicitly tied to people (e-mail addresses, phone numbers, etc.), and no correlation of the two data types will be possible. All cookie user identification data will also be removed...

Microsoft has also joined forces with Ask.com in calling for the industry to formulate and adopt a specific, common set of privacy standards. Microsoft's claim is that these new standards will give consumers far more control over their data privacy and how such information is used and distributed. In addition, the goal is to give customers a more cohesive single privacy policy, rather than the current patchwork of federal, state, and corporate privacy statutes.

...These moves come after Google's own recent announcements regarding its anonymization of server logs and its further statements that the company will only retain cookie data for two years.

Such movements from Microsoft and Google are more than just an act of oneupmanship...but are a broader response to consumer concerns and nasty allegations...that've been flung around recently. With the Senate set to review Google's proposed merger with DoubleClick and with Microsoft's own recent purchase of aQuantive, its in the industry's best interest to appear very concerned about personal privacy, even as market consolidations point towards more specific, focused, and, in a word, personalized advertising on the horizon.