

# Innovations



Mark Saum, President

## 3 things you can do today to save on energy costs

With the current state of the economy weighing heavily on everyone's mind, energy-saving techniques are a great way to lower expenses.

1. Change your lights. Using compact florescent light bulbs (CFLs), you can save \$30 per bulb over its lifetime.
2. Reprogram your thermostat to suit your office hours and turn the temperature down a few degrees overall.
3. Turn off your computers over the weekend if you are not going to log in remotely to use them.

Lighten the load on your pocketbook this year. Save energy and save money.

## Apple and Microsoft to offer new operating systems in 2009

*This will be remembered as a landmark year for computer operating systems. In 2009, Apple's new Snow Leopard system is slated to debut and Microsoft's Windows 7 will soon be available, too.*

### Apple's new release.

Those with a first look at Snow Leopard say it tweaks the original Leopard operating system, with significant improvements of interest to developers. However, little to be noticed for standard users.

### Windows 7 expectations and features coming soon.

The official release of Microsoft's Windows 7 will affect more users than initially expected. It will show up in new computers on the shelves this fall, and Vista upgrades to Windows 7 should be available at about the same time.



The new system solves many of the compatibility and performance problems Vista has struggled with since it was first introduced. When it was first released, it didn't work properly with accessories, such as printers, until vendors made software fixes to accommodate the operating system changes.

For Windows 7, developers were told to enforce a rule that "If it works in Vista, it will work in 7." Upgrades from Windows XP, however will not be supported, according to Business Week tech expert, Stephen Wildstrom.

The Wall Street Journal's Walter Mossberg is enthusiastic about 7. Even in test form, he says, it "leaves Vista in the dust," and is a pleasure to use. It has fewer nag screens than Vista and is faster. Mossberg says it could be a serious competitor for Apple's current

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## Networked or not: printer troubleshooting tips

*Have you ever experienced a problem with your printer and didn't know who to call? The problem could be from the printer itself or from the connection.*

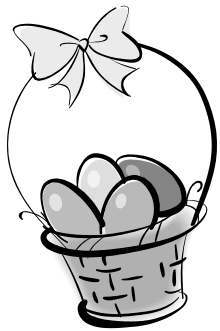
**So, how do you know if your printers are networked?** Consider the method in which your computer connects to the printer and where the printer is located. If your printer is on your desk and there is an umbilical cord that shoots jobs between the printer and your computer only, then you do not have a networked printer.

However, if your printer is on the other side of the office in a copy room and you occasionally have to put up a fight with your coworkers to process a large job, you are undoubtedly using a networked printer.

**At the first sign of trouble, check the print queue.** Keep in mind how your printer is accessed by your computer. If it is not networked, try a full shutdown following these three easy steps before calling in a technician:

*(Continued on page 3)*





## Apple and Microsoft...

*(Continued from page 1)*

Leopard system. He doesn't know how it will compare to Apple's coming Snow Leopard.

### Windows 7 has flashy, multi-touch

**screen navigation.** Borrowing from Apple's OS X system, it has a simplified task bar at the bottom of the screen. It shows a single icon for every program you have open to make it easier to navigate between windows. Also, there is a simple option that lets you put an icon into the taskbar.

Vista's Mail, Calendar, Photo Gallery, Movie Maker and Address Book programs are removed.

However, you can get similar free programs from the Windows Live service website as a download or you can always find alternatives from another company on the web.

**2009 will be an interesting year.** These two new operating systems are not the only ideas in motion. But don't be too quick to update your entire office to a new operating system just because it is available. Give us a call for a full evaluation of your organizational needs. We will help you find the right system to suit your company's goals.

## The danger of becoming dependent on Outlook Nicknames; save them as contacts or delete

*Think about how you enter the address for a recipient when you create an e-mail in Outlook. Do you rely on the nicknames that already exist to fill in the address?*

### Outlook users beware! Nickname files can be lost or erased without notice.

Don't rely on Outlook to auto-complete addresses for you. Save your contacts in your address book and know their information is always safe.

**Did you know...** Outlook's auto-complete feature attempts to fill in addresses from what is called

the "nickname list". Outlook builds this list over time as you send and receive messages and uses it as the primary source to auto-fill the addresses. Occasionally, the program will pull suggestions from your address book but, there are no guarantees that the program is smart enough to find the contacts you need. Also, it does not prioritize new address book entries over the "nickname list" addresses. You will need to double check the address if you continue to rely on the auto-fill function.

### Use your address book every time you address a message.

Have you ever been disappointed by the auto-fill function not finding a contact you know is in your address book? Here is a handy solution to speed things along: press CTRL+K after typing the first few letters of the recipients name. This prompts the "Check Names" button that looks at the characters you have typed so far and compares them with your address book entries. If there is only one match, it will complete the entry for you. If there is more than one name that fits the criteria, you will receive a list of contacts to choose from (not including the names stored in your "nickname list").

### How can I add recipients in the nickname list to my address book quickly?

The next time you address an e-mail and you use the auto-fill function to add the contact address, right click on the address after it is entered into the field and choose "Add to Outlook Contacts". Then a window will pop-up for you to enter the appropriate information for the contact.

### How can I delete names from the list?

Have you ever composed a message and noticed that the name populated did not have the correct address or realized there were other names you no longer needed to save? Clean out your "nickname file" by typing the first few letters and then using the arrow up and down keys to select a name, press DELETE to erase them from the list or ENTER to use the name.



## Networked or not; printer troubleshooting...

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1. Visit the *Start Menu*, if you are a Windows user, and choose *Settings*, then *Printers and Faxes*. This takes you to the list of printers available for you to use. Simply click on the printer in question and another window will appear called the *Print Queue*, that shows a list of jobs currently loaded into the printer.
2. Visit the *File* option on the menu bar at the top and select *Cancel All Documents*. This will clear the document queue. Be sure to watch the queue to ensure all documents are canceled and disappear before you proceed.
3. Then turn off the printer and shutdown your computer, take a walk for three to five minutes with the machines off. When you return, turn on the printer, then the computer, and retry the job.

If you work with networked printers you may need an office manager or system administrator to access the print queue on the server computer and clear the current jobs. Remember, if you do not clear the queue, turning the printer off and on may not help.

**Check for obvious physical issues?** This may sound like a given for troubleshooting, but check the power cable and paper trays to ensure the printer is in proper working order.

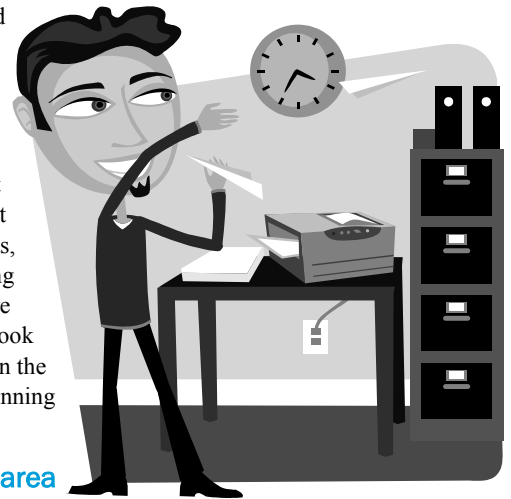
We once received a call from a panicked office manager who had a half dozen jobs in the print queue and the printer kept turning off and on by itself. She was at the end of her rope.

The jobs were taking an eternity to print and she was constantly having to babysit the machine. What she didn't realize was, the power cable had jiggled loose making the power connection unstable. When we arrived onsite to assess the situation, it took three seconds to push the plug back in on the back of the machine and get it up and running again.

### The paper trays may be another area

**for error.** Even if your printer doesn't read an error, it doesn't mean there aren't any. Take a moment to pull out the paper tray(s) and remove the paper. Fan through the paper and check the guides. Make sure there are no bent corners on the paper or wrinkled sheets as this may jam the printer. Then replace the paper in the tray and make sure the guides are tight against the sides of the paper, then retry the job.

**Don't have time to run through the troubleshooting techniques?** Give us a call. We are here to help. Take a breather and let us handle the work.



## Don't fight with tangled cords or charging stations; the Powermat saves time and limits frustration

*Everyone is always looking for time saving strategies to incorporate in their busy lives. This handy device will not only save time but eliminate charging frustrations.*

HoMedics Powermat North America (HPNA) recently introduced a product that will charge your portable devices — such as cell phones, laptops or iPods — without plugging them into the wall. This handy device was developed based on “principles of magnetic induction,” using a unique energy distribution process.

**It's a six-in-one device!** The Powermat can charge from three to six devices on one mat. This means you can place up to six of your toys on a

charger at the same time without crawling under your desk at work to plug them in, or scrambling for outlets. The best part, you don't have to open the charging flap on your cell phone, camera, or GPS device and fuss with plugging in the appropriate charging cable. The only “plugging in” that takes place is the Powermat's power adapter that you stick in a wall outlet just ONCE!

**Free from the cable hunt...** The Powermat will soon be available in five different models to suit your needs and should be compatible with most devices. HPNA plans to release a list of compatible devices soon. This great little find will be available this fall in stores to help you ease your charging frustrations, saving you time and money.



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1900 Preston Road, #267-96

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## Inquiring Minds...

**A GPS guide for disaster.** Do you have locations in your GPS system labeled with nicknames? For example, “Home”, “Bank”, or “School”? Beware! Clever thieves may be able to use this information to their advantage. Just a few weeks ago, a friend of mine was telling me about a couple that attended the Super Bowl and had their car broken into. They found it strange at first glance because the thieves only took a few things; their GPS, garage door opener and some money out of the console.

The couple reported the crime immediately and headed home where they recognized the reasoning behind the strange theft. Apparently, the thieves had used the GPS to guide them to the house. Then they used the garage remote control to open the garage door and enter the home. These thieves were on top of it because the house was almost completely cleaned out. Judging by the volume of items taken, the thieves must have brought a truck to steal the contents. Since they knew the game schedule and had the garage available for their scheme, they knew they would not be interrupted.

The moral of the story is never put nicknames on your GPS. Keep your home and family members safe. I couldn't imagine what may have happened if the couple had children at home with a babysitter or young adult teens home alone.

### Laptop hardware woes; repair or replace it?

This is a common question with laptop hardware failures. Occasionally, a client will call and there is only one small item on their laptop to repair, like a fan. With laptops, always have a trained professional assess the situation and explain the failure as well as repair costs.

Unfortunately, with laptops a majority of hardware failures are extremely difficult to repair. The fact of the matter is, laptops keep getting smaller and more compact. That

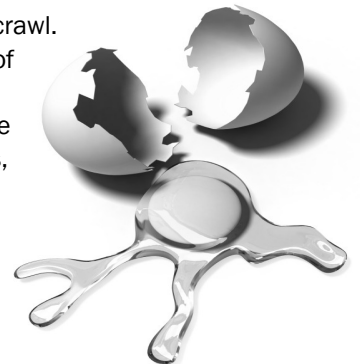
means less space for moving parts, if there are any. So, to repair a hardware failure, you may be forced to replace a lot of other parts too. This can be very costly and unnecessary. By the time you pay a \$100-\$300 for the parts, \$300 at least for labor to replace the parts, and calculate the money you have lost with your laptop out of commission for a few days or more, the final cost generally comes in at over \$500—\$1,000.

The cost to replace the parts winds up being more than that of a new laptop with better features. If your laptop is over 3 years old and your warranty is out of date, we suggest replacing your laptop with a newer model if you have a hardware failure. That's right, don't bother repairing the old clunker. Laptops are not like automobiles gaining value as they become antiques. Just give up the ghost and treat yourself to a faster more advanced laptop. You may find a new laptop to be a refreshing change with increased speed and functionality.

## Eggcellent support at your finger tips!

Don't wait until your computers slow to a crawl. Your business should not suffer because of your computers. Technology is meant to enhance your operations giving you a more efficient mechanism for processing orders, managing contacts and data, or even scheduling time with clients.

Make sure your computers receive regular updates and your information is backed-up in a secure off-site location. Give us a call today for more information.



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