

PDF Files

Welcome

This month's new members:

No new members this month

2010 COURSES

Hope that you all had a very good Xmas and over-indulged as much as possible. With new year now upon us it is time to look at what courses you want to do. Check out the Calendar and if there is something you would like but not listed contact the co-ordinator.

Now that we have dual-boot XP/Vista/Windows 7 computers we can run courses that cover these three operating systems.

If you have bought a new computer in the last few months chances are that it will have Windows 7 or there was option for an upgrade. Windows 7 is superior to Vista so if you haven't done your upgrade check with your retailer how you can obtain this.

Even if you have done a previous course on XP/Vista it would be worthwhile up-skilling yourself on Windows 7.

CAMERA RAW

At Xmas our daughter brought her Canon DSLR which had numerous photographs on the card. We couldn't see the photos when connected to the TV as they were in RAW format and not JPG. Most recent cameras will record in RAW which is proprietary to each camera and are very big files. This format is loved by professionals as there is no in-camera processing or degradation as occurs with JPG.

Each camera will have its own software to edit the photograph. Fortunately iPhoto (Mac) does read most RAW files so we copied to the Mac and could then view them. But most Windows applications don't. So if your files are to be shared or viewed on a TV you save these as JPG. Check your manual or settings.

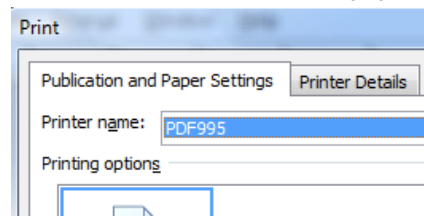
As mentioned previously, PDF (Portable Document Format) is a universal file format that can be read by almost any computer. It has numerous advantages such as; relatively small file size so easy to email and place on web pages, difficult for the document to be copied, retains its formatting across different platforms, can be encrypted, the reader does not need to know what software was used to create the file, among others.

This newsletter is written using Apple's Pages - which is a complete desktop publishing and word programme then converted to PDF. To read all you need is a free reader such as Adobe PDF reader, Foxit etc.

You start by creating any document in any programme such as Word, Publisher, Excel or even photographs such as JPG, TIF etc. You then convert this to PDF.

But how do you create a PDF? Previously you needed Adobe Acrobat which was very expensive but these days you can do it yourself for free. If you own a Mac you are in luck as there is a creator built in. You create the document then click Print and select to save to PDF. Using Windows you install a PDF "printer" - it is not actually a printer but is installed as a faux printer and is listed in your print command as printer e.g. Cute PDF or PDF995

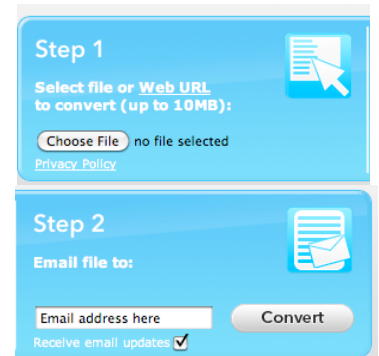
Below are some links to popular



Printing a Publisher File toPDF using PDF995

free PDF writers. Download the file and click it to open. Most will self install. For Windows I prefer PDF995.

As an alternative there are some free on-line converters. With these you upload your file to the site where it will be converted and sent back as a PDF to you email mailbox I use the free Primo PDF at work as the PDF "printer" we have does not convert the web links to make them clickable whereas Primo does. The simple two-step process as shown next.



One problem with PDF files is the ease of "stripping" the information to use in other documents. Some readers have a tool to copy the text - Adobe has a Snapshot and a Select tool. The Snapshot copies the area as an image whereas using the Select tool you select a block of text and copy (Ctrl+C) and Paste into your document.

This has its limits and a better method is to use a programme that does this for you. Most of these are not free but there is very good on-line one which have found to be quite accurate. While of the pay-for ones do not retain the formatting and do not copy pictures very well is Nitro PDF from the same people who provide Primo. It works the same way and converts files to either Word or Excel.

Adobe has released version 9 of its reader. The reader has a lot of tools, the many uses being explained on their web site.

AdobeV9

<http://tinyurl.com/6mh882>

Foxit Reader

<http://tinyurl.com/cjsb84>

NitroPDF - Converter

<http://tinyurl.com/4r4fh6>

PDF-Xchange Viewer

<http://tinyurl.com/35faqg>

Cute PDFWriter

<http://www.cutepdf.com/>

PDF995 Writer

<http://www.pdf995.com/>

It's a Fact!

- Last year's computer is out of date 2 months before you bought it.
- Hard drive demands double every year.
- Just as you have learnt to use a programme they update it and you have to start again -

(e.g. Word 2003 to Word 2007 to 2010)

THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

You have just completed that world trip and have arrived back home with loads of photographs. What do you do with them? You could go down to the photoshop and get prints made but how do you store these? Mostly in an album. Your friends WILL NOT be interested in looking at every one or most for that matter. You could post them on Flickr or MySpace but that is a long task and again most people will not be interested.

Some tips:

- Make a backup copy of all photos and store on a non-re-writable CD or DVD - Not a pen drive
- Use copies - not originals
- Limit your photos to the best 50 - 60.
- Put in only one of each location
- Print and place in an album.
- Make up a CD with a self running slideshow using a programme like Picasa
- If you have a Mac you can upload your iPhoto Albums direct to your Google account for sharing
- Take your very best 12 and make a calendar - more below on this
- Don't email photos as anyone can get hold of your personal pics - you don't want those shots of you at a nude beach in Denmark doing the rounds!

NZ company Frogprints provides a service to put your photos on all sorts of things from placemats, mugs and calendars. But one of the best at reasonable price is a Photo Book. You download the free software (Win and Mac) and set out your photos, adding any text you want. Book sizes range from A6 to A4 and square. Costs for an A4 with 20 pages - about 60 photos - is \$49.95



Frogprints:

<http://www.frogprints.co.nz>

Zip, Tar, Rar - File Compression

Have you received a file with a name like Myfile.zip and wondered what it is? To reduce the file size computer programmers came up with a way of squeezing a file to make it smaller. Why make a file smaller? In the past there were few hard drives on PCs with files being stored on floppies. To get as much data as possible on a disc they found a way of removing repetitive information. They came up with a mathematical algorithm that could reduce a file by as much as 70% or more.

So if you get a file with extensions such as .zip, .tar, .rar you will know that this has been compressed. It works a bit like this imagine a book of 500 pages. A lot of the book is taken up with "white space" - about 50% in fact. So if we can remove this we reduce the book to 250 pages. The computer programme will remove this space and when opened it will receive a command telling it where to put the white space back.

Both Windows and Mac's have software built-in to read these files so there is not much you need to do to open one. But why with big hard drives should you use compressed files today? Well with email a 2MB Word file be compressed to about 300KB so it is much faster to send. On most broadband connections your sending speed is about 128Kb/second so it will take a very long time to send the file.

Also video and photographs use compression. For example a 1 hour

video is about 60GB in size. By converting to MPEG2 (DVD Quality) the 1 hour video is reduced to 1/60th (1 GB). Photos use JPG which depending upon quality also gives a relatively small file size. Audio files use MP3 or AAC.



PDF is also compresses files but not as much as .zip does. If you want to send that large novel to your publisher. save the file as a normal Word document, say, My Great Big Book.doc. Go to Windows explorer and Right-click the file point at Send To, then select Compressed (zipped) Folder. Windows Vista will compress (zip) the file or folder and save the new zipped file in the same place as the original file with the new name My Great Big Book.zip. You can save one or many files this way. Some files though will not compress very. Photographs in JPG and Videos are already compressed. While there are programmes that you can buy you don't need these as the built-in ones handle most functions you need.

Microsoft How-To

<http://tinyurl.com/ycuqgto>

File Compression - How Stuff Works

<http://tinyurl.com/dru6k>

Office 2010

In June Microsoft will release Office 2010. Unlike previous upgrades where they offered a 40% discount this time there will be no discounts. There will be only 3 home-use editions. While no NZ pricing is available, in the US the Home and Student version (Word, Excel and Powerpoint) will be selling for US\$149 (NZ\$203) which you will be able to in-

stall on up to 3 computers. Many computers will come with a special reduced-function version - Office Starter - pre-installed. With these you be able to buy a key to unlock the full functions for US\$119.

More info at:

<http://tinyurl.com/y1r2o69>

Genealogy Notes

We have been tracing some ancestors who emigrated to NZ from the Channel Islands about 1890. While we could get some information off the internet most is not on-line. A lot is still held by parishes and can only be viewed by visiting the area. So what can you do without a visit? First try to see what you can get from Family Search then, depending upon the country, contact a local genealogy society. If the language is English you may be able to contact a local Council by email. At this point it may be worth joining the New Zealand Society of Genealogists who will have direct contacts and

may be able to put you in touch with an English speaking local. Short of a visit you may have to engage a professional. Again the NZSoG will be able to help. We have been able to contact a resident who is an ancestor and they are helping with our search but you may not be so lucky at the start.

Family Search

<http://tinyurl.com/684hcr>

NZ Society of Genealogists

<http://tinyurl.com/45skd3>