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ROM is issued  
six-times  
a year to  
members of the  
Guildford PC  
User Group  
All Contributions  
to the Editor  
Tony Hawes  
(details on page 2)

# ROM

Newsletter of the Guildford PC User Group

## Editor's Bit

### Apologies

As some of you will know, because of a family illness, I have not been able to get ROM out on time recently and publication has been later than usual. However, things are now much better and normal service will be resumed over the coming months.

### Annual General Meeting of the Group

Because of the absence on holiday of two committee members, the AGM normally held at the April meeting, had to be postponed and will now take place at the May meeting. In accordance with the rules, individual committee members will explain their past years' activities and the treasurer will present the accounts. Committee members of the Guildford PC User Group will stand down and an election of a new committee will take place.

If you have any points that you think should be raised at the AGM, please let your Editor know before the meeting (his contact details on page 2).

This is the opportunity to help guide the group in the months ahead. Please let your requirements or wishes be known to the Editor or a member of the committee. Remember, if you don't volunteer, things will remain the same and some work may not even get done.

### Windows 7 — Due 23<sup>rd</sup> October?

At a press conference in London on 30<sup>th</sup> April to launch a new range of Acer computers we were told by Acer European President Massimo D'Angelo that new Acer computers shipped from 23<sup>rd</sup> of October will come installed with Windows 7 and if you purchased a new Acer computer in the previous 30-days with Vista, a voucher would be included for a free upgrade to Windows 7.

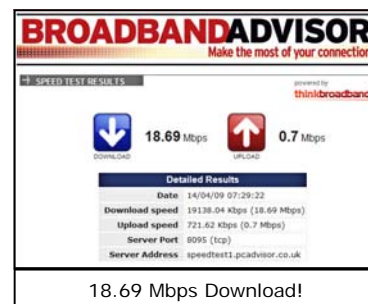
This is the most authoritative indication yet as to the release of Windows 7 which reached Release Candidate 1 status in April and is now available as a Public Beta Download, and will be available until July 2009 (see page 15).

### Internet Speed

Your Editor is a long-term NTL/Virgin Media cable customer finally took the plunge and closed his BT, Tiscali and Plus.Net ADSL

accounts and subscribed to Virgin's 20Mb Broadband service that comes down Virgin's cable. So far with seven-weeks experience of the service I'm very happy

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ROM is now only available as a full-colour .pdf download from the Group web page at:  
[www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk](http://www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk)

**NEXT MEETING — Monday  
11th May 2009 at 7.45 p.m.**

### AGM Followed by Scanning — a Practical Demo

AGM and in connection with the AGM a free entry into a competition to win some seriously good software. Details will be e-mailed to members before the meeting. To be followed by a "hands-on" look at how well Epson's semi-professional VX 700 scanner performs.

Spread the word and please bring a friend — Coffee, tea & chocolate biscuits are free.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7.45pm at the Stoughton Youth Club and Community Centre (opposite "The Royal" — Pub) Worplesdon Road (A322), Guildford.

### Forthcoming Meetings

Monday 8th June 2009 at 7.45 pm. In arrangement, but likely to be a demo of Magix's Movie Edit Pro Plus.

Monday 13th July. The finer points of taking eye-catching photographs.  
Monday 10th August. No meeting summer holiday break.

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries or questions about the Guildford PC User Group and its activities please contact the following members of the committee:

### Chairman (and Editor)

Tony Hawes

For Contact details see the entry under Editor (below).

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### Laurence's Web Page:

<http://www.orchardoo.com>

(this site contains many of the reviews that have appeared in ROM)

### Group Web Page:

[www.guilfordpcusergroup.co.uk](http://www.guilfordpcusergroup.co.uk)

### Meeting Room Key Holder

Tony Hawes

Details below

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as most of Virgin's claims for the speed appear to be borne out in practice, as the screen grab on page 1 shows.

### Goodbye Encarta & Microsoft Flight Simulator

I was truly sorry to learn that Microsoft Encarta is to be discontinued at the end of 2009. For those who weren't around at the time, or not into computers, Encarta was the first successful multimedia encyclopaedia. Your editor was present when Microsoft launched it at a press conference at the Science Museum way back in September 1993, this being the first press event covered by me on assuming the editorship of ROM in the summer of 1993. On launch the CD-ROM contained more than 60,000 articles and it cost an expensive £240, although to be fair it was reduced to a more affordable £60 a few months later.



Encarta was based on Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopaedia, which Microsoft bought the rights to. Don't forget, this was long before the web, which didn't really take off until the mid-1990's, and almost 10 years before on-line encyclopaedias like Wikipedia, which effectively killed Encarta. In those days if you wanted to find something out or check a fact you either went to a library or, if you were lucky enough to own a high-end PC with a CD-ROM drive, you looked it up on Encarta. Rivals like the CD-ROM versions of Encyclopaedia Britannica may have been more authoritative but EB was eye-wateringly expensive. What made Encarta so good was the use of multimedia, small video clips and animations, sound and even a sprinkling of games, and the graphics and search facilities were really well thought out. Searching for information might be a whole lot easier nowadays, and Encarta's style might look rather old fashioned now, but back then it was a genuinely awesome and I, for one, will miss it.

Also announced by Microsoft recently was the cessation of development of Microsoft Flight Simulator, Currently known as

Microsoft FSX. This is a real pity as Microsoft Flight Simulator has been a popular game/simulation for many years and used by me, among many others, to hone and keep up-to-date my flying skills learnt so many years ago in the R.A.F.

### Secretary's Notes — April Meeting

In the absence of our Secretary on holiday Laurence Fenn provided the following résumé of his presentation at the April meeting.

"Laurence Fenn gave a demonstration of Reallusion's Crazy Talk 5. This program can take a photo and turn it into a talking animation. He showed how you mark the defining features on a face and then import a sound file to animate too. You can add background music and move the features on the face as well as add effects and objects like glasses, hats or a moustache. As the whole process can take a while to create, he played some files he created earlier, like a gorilla singing Phil Collin's "In The Air Tonight" and also his niece's dog Ozzy singing "Take Me Out" (by Franz Ferdinand). YouTube has quite a few videos created with this software, and you can create video files in a variety of formats, included mobile phone files and flash video files".

### Secretary's Review of the Year

**April 2008 Meeting — AGM.** The evening started by holding the AGM. As the Chairman position is vacant the meeting was opened by Tony Hawes, the Editor of ROM. Tony emphasised the importance of ROM and but said it was still an uphill struggle to get articles. He thanked these who regularly provided contributions but asked for more members to give some thought to it.

The Secretary, Bryce McCrerrick, pointed out how important it was to increasing our numbers. It is only with a considerably larger audience that we can reasonably invite representatives of manufacturers to come and discuss their products. The last five or so months the talk has been given by Tony, and we are very grateful to him for this but he must be running out of subjects. The Treasurer, Francis Jacques, presented the accounts. Under the new management of the hall our rent expenditure over the last year has decreased and we are still in the black and showing an increase in our reserves. He recommended that the subscription for the next year should remain at £20. The committee then stood down.

Tony Hawes was proposed and seconded as Chairman and Editor of ROM which was agreed unanimously. The other positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Web Master remained with the incumbents who were elected unopposed by the members present. The first action of the new committee was to propose that the subscription remain at £20 as suggested by the Treasurer. This was agreed and the AGM closed.

**April 2008 Talk.** The evening talk was given by Paul Kuzmin and his subject was the new DVD Encyclopaedia Britannica 2008. He started by comparing Britannica with Encarta. He found that Britannica was considerably more academic than Encarta which was rather "theme park" but commented surprisingly, with examples, that Encarta gave more emphasis to British matters. Britannica was rather "Americanised".

Britannica includes over 100,000 articles, 20,000 photos and illustrations and over 2,000 maps and organises them in a logical way with a browser-style presentation with a

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clear row of icons at the top.

**May 2008 Meeting — Microsoft Live OneCare version 2.0.** Your editor showed Microsoft's Windows Live OneCare 2.0, which Microsoft describes as an all-in-one, self-updating PC care service.

Windows Live OneCare has had a shaky history, but as demonstrated the latest version, Windows Live OneCare 2.0, is vastly improved and fixes most of the problems of the earlier 1.6 version whilst at the same time adding a matching set of features that complements the built-in security and PC health features as found in Windows Vista.

Like previous versions, it combines antivirus, anti-spyware, and firewall security features with PC tune-up functionality and a first-class PC backup and restore service. But the latest version takes these features to the next level with centralised multiple-PC management, monthly progress reports, online photo backup, and other new features.

One particular feature that Tony enthused over was the Start-time Optimizer. While Windows users can turn to a number of places in the User Interface to control what applications run when Windows boots, there's never been a truly excellent and centralised control panel for this kind of functionality. OneCare 2.0 seeks to fill this need with a new Start-time Optimizer, which is available via the Tune-up tab of the OneCare Settings dialog. There, one sees a button labelled Change start-up settings, which unleashes one of OneCare's best, and most well-hidden, new features.

The resulting window, simply titled "Turn off unused programs," is fairly obvious: Here one saw an alphabetical list of the applications that have been configured to run when Windows boots up. Next to each application is a set of On-Off toggle switches: Those marked On will run, those marked Off will not. What makes this feature special is that we saw some information about each application, which was accessed by clicking the little carat character that's found between the icon and name of each entry. This, along with suggestions found next to most but not all entries, will help the non-technical make better decisions about which applications to disable at boot-time: After all, it's not always clear which things are safe to disable.

As Tony explained going into a DOS session and using MS Config via Regedit allows you to do this but is not so easy to interpret or use as Live OneCare's Start-time Optimizer.

The included anti-virus trapped Tony's pet nasty virus in its tracks and the Firewall appeared safe whilst backup backed up working files on a daily basis, with very little in the way of impact on resources.

Pricewise Windows OneCare 2.0 costs about £24 a year at Amazon.co.uk, but it can generally be found for much less (£11 as an OEM product) which is a bargain. In fact, it's turned the PC security industry on its head. Now, McAfee, Symantec, and other major players are all offering OneCare-like products too.

A fine set of tools with a demonstration that

made for an interesting and informative evening.

**June 2008 Meeting.** Ross Carter was down to talk and demonstrate his own "Vectrasoft" web authoring program, but didn't turn up for the meeting he was scheduled to talk to. Your editor normally has a standby option and he stood in at VERY short notice (like half an hour!) to demonstrate the features of the new Epson Stylus Photo R2880 printer previewed in last month's ROM. So the evening was not a total washout.

**July 2008 Meeting — Relational Databases.** The talk on Monday 14 July was a joint presentation given by Dennis Skinner and Francis Jacques on producing a relational database using Microsoft Access. Dennis explained that in the 1970's separate programs or tables were produced to cover a particular event or in a company a particular project. It was not until the 1980's or 1990's that tables were being produced to use the same facts for a number of purposes or combining one set of facts with another. These tables are part of a relational database and Microsoft Access is a relational management system.

Dennis outlined a number of tables (about 13) associated with cycle racing. They covered such things as participants, venue, race length, clubs, race dates etc. and he outlined how they could be associated for a particular race.

Francis, our treasurer, enjoys cycle racing in his spare time and demonstrated how initially using Access he created tables, explaining how the fields are specified, the properties of each field and the data type for the data the field will store. When all the tables are completed the information for a particular race at a particular venue can be set up by creating Multiple Table Queries which he demonstrated. Francis also showed how handicaps can be calculated using Excel and added by the use of a basic query.

**August—September 2008 Meeting.** As is usual with the holiday break no meeting was held in August. The meeting on Monday 8 September took the form of an introduction to the new Acer Aspire 8920 laptop by Tony Hawes. The 8920 is a powerful computer with a Intel Core 2 Duo 2.4 GHz processor, 4GB RAM and a 320 GB hard disk. It has an 18.4 inch TFT (1920x1080) screen and a integrated DVD system including HD Blu-Ray.

The first demonstration consisted of comparing HD Blu-Ray output with normal DVD using Sony's "International Blu-Ray Demonstration" DVD. The benefits were substantial and easy to see and a number of examples were shown. The next demonstration used Dolby's "The Sound of High Definition" demo DVD. The laptop includes a built in 5:1 speaker system. The "HD" aspect of the sound was interesting but one wonders if this provision is justified when taking into consideration the poor quality, as you would expect, from the small

built in speakers. The sound system itself, is of course, is to Dolby HD Standard and this would be fully demonstrated if connect by way of the fitted HDMI interface to an external sound system. On the left of the keyboard there is a very clever and useful control system for the DVD system. The very interesting evening ended with a short demonstration of "Flight Simulator" as it looks on a wide-screen laptop.

**October 2008 Meeting: Dragon Naturally Speaking 10 and Dyson DC25 Ball Vacuum Cleaner.** Paul Kuzmin showed his expertise with Nuance's Dragon Naturally Speaking 10. Starting off with a minimal voice training session, using a headset/mic connected to the audio front ports of an Acer Laptop. Paul showed how easy it was to talk to the computer and get a legible stream of spoken words to appear in a MS Word document. Using spoken commands he showed how to format the document with different font styles, paragraphs, heading etc.

He then tried the wireless headphone option using a Plantronics wireless headset. This worked brilliantly with Paul being able to walk around the computer dictating all the while. As an experiment we asked him to get as physically far away as possible from the computer to see whether the increased range would degrade the signal received by the computer. No difference was noted and again words spoken were translated into a clear and legible stream of text in the document.

Our next request was for him to talk as quickly as possible to see whether it was possible to overload the signal processing capabilities of the program (and computer) in transcribing speech into text. Again the program coped very well indeed, there was a short delay between Paul's dictation and the result appearing on the screen, but it did appear as an almost verbatim transcription.

Overall this was a very good demonstration of Dragon Dictate 10's capabilities and Paul is to be complimented on his expertise in his use of the program.

We next had Mike Bray showing how easy it was to manoeuvre Dyson's DC25 Ball cleaner around our feet, under the tables and around the chairs. Given that this was Mike's first time in handling a ball cleaner he did remarkably well, even if he did dent a few toes during his demo. An interesting evening.

**November 2008 Meeting. Logitech's new Z5 USB-powered speakers and Nero 9.** Our meeting on Monday 10 November was in two parts. It started with Tony Hawes showing the new Logitech Z5 speakers designed for use with a laptop. These are two small Omni directional stereo speakers powered from your computer's USB connection. Being Omni directional the stereo experience fills the room. Tony demonstrated them by playing extracts from CDs and a DVD. This included a wide selection of music which included the following:

1. **Jazz:** The Jacques Loussier Trio's famous

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recording of Bach's Air on the G String from the album "Play Bach 2". This recording was used in the Hamlet cigar advertisements for over 35 years.

2. **Vocal 1:** Katherine Jenkins singing Pie Jesu from her new album "Sacred Arias".
3. **Vocal 2:** Elena Kats-Chernin singing "Eliza's Aria" from the "Wild Swans" ballet. "Eliza's Aria" is the quirky tune that features in the Lloyds TSB advertising campaign.
4. **Instrumental:** Alison Balsom playing the first movement of Hummel's Trumpet Concerto from her new album "Haydn and Hummel Trumpet Concertos".
5. **Orchestral/Choral:** Elgar "Coronation Ode 1902 – Land of Hope and Glory" finale. An awesome and hair-raising performance of 'Land of Hope and Glory' in its original 'Coronation Ode' setting. Sonically far superior to the version sung annually at the Last Night of the Proms.
6. **DVD:** Walt Disney's "Fantasia 2000" movie. Camille Saint-Saens "Carnival of the Animals" (finale).

We were all very impressed by the quality from such small speakers. They came on the market about a month ago priced at about £60.

**Nero 9.** The second part of the evening consisted of a presentation by Laurence Fenn of Nero 9, the latest version of the world's best selling digital media suite. Laurence found the installation tedious, taking over four hours. He had to download the updates from the website in order to get it to install. It has a major revamped interface. In addition to CD and DVD burning it includes a wide range of functions including video editing, media streaming, and file backup. The software can now identify and remove commercials from recorded TV programmes. Some Vista enhanced features (such as the Live TV sidebar gadget) are not yet available and will appear in an update, but as details are not given in the updates as to what is included, it could be difficult to know when they are available. Taking everything into consideration including the installation Laurence was not impressed and suggests that if you're satisfied with version 7 or 8 you should stay with it. See his review in this issue.

#### **December 2008 Meeting — Annual Christmas Quiz.**

It was our quiz night again, compiled by Tony Hawes, as every year. This time he did not start off by assuring us all that this years questions would be much easier—we never believed him anyway! As usual the quiz consisted of a multiple-choice selection of twenty questions with four possible answers. As the papers were being marked we had coffee or tea with warm

mince pies while we waited anxiously for the results. The winners were, first Paul Kuzmin and equal second, Francis Jacques, Laurence Fenn, Mike Bray and Dave Thomas. I'll go no further down the list to avoid embarrassment. It is a great quiz as all contesters got a prize. The excellent selection of prizes were donated by Corel, Logitech, Magix, Norton, Paragon and others to whom we are very grateful.

**January 2009 Meeting. An Introduction to Continuum Theory.** We had an interesting and rather different talk at our meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January. Miles Osmaston agreed to give an introduction to Continuum Theory. His talk was based on a paper he delivered to a conference on the "Physical Interpretations of Relativity Theory" held at Imperial College, London in September 2008. His talk was illustrated with a Power Point presentation. After a brief introduction to Continuum Theory, Miles argued that the aether as required by James Clerk Maxwell in his famous equations of the 1870's but avoided by Albert Einstein in his Special Theory of Relativity of 1905 was of fundamental importance. Its neglect under the general relativity banner had been highly detrimental to scientifically progress as it had fostered the intangible concepts of Big Bang, Dark Energy and black holes. He explained how the acceptance of the aether can lead to a new understanding of gravitational forces and he went on to illustrate how one can clarify the formation of galaxies and planetary systems like our own.

We must thank Miles for the work he put into this branch of learning and sharing his conclusions with us. This was a very complex and thought provoking talk requiring much concentration. As your editor commented at the end "...I came away knowing more, but understanding less, but nevertheless found it fascinating..." The paper he gave to the conference sponsored by the British Society for Philosophy of Science is on the internet at [www.physicsfoundations.or](http://www.physicsfoundations.or).

**February 2009 Meeting.** The planned meeting had to be cancelled at very short notice as it coincided with the worst snowfall for 18-years.

**March 2009 Meeting.** Our meeting on Monday 9 March was in three parts. It started with a most interesting talk by Laurence Fenn on Resizing Images on your PC with the minimum loss of detail. He first listed the various image sources, digital cameras, mobile phones, email scanner or web downloads etc. and then asked the question "why resize". Perhaps your image is too big, it consists of too many KBs to send by email, to add to a document or for a web page or even too small to print out for your requirement. He then went on to explain the resampling methods available and the factors to consider:- blurring, colour depth, resolution etc and showed examples. He then listed the software that can be used

to resize images and their various prices. Laurence will be putting an expansion of his talk on the club web site.

Continuing on this theme Tony Hawes demonstrated a freeware program "Fast Image Resizer" that does this simply and easily.

Available from here:

[www.adionsoft.net/fastimageresize](http://www.adionsoft.net/fastimageresize)

- Resize images to any size quickly and in high quality
- Create thumbnails for your website images
- Resize Algorithm quality and JPEG quality configurable
- Create resized files in new folder, or in the same folder as the source
- Use EXIF information to rotate your pictures to the correct orientation
- Copy EXIF info from source image
- Easy resizing by using windows explorer Send To menu
- Automatic cropping option
- Can read JPG, BMP, GIF, PNG, TIFF and HD Photo (.wdp, .hdp) files
- Writes JPG or BMP files
- Compatible with Windows 2000, XP and Vista ..and its Free.

The evening finished with John Childs describing the new Ricoh R10 camera. This is one of the better compact cameras available in the £150 to £200 range. It has a 7.1 optical wide angle zoom and 10 million effective pixels. The sensitivity is given as ISO 1600 but John (who is a very experienced photographer and leading member of the Farnborough Photographic Society) detected noise starting to show above about ISO 400. It has a 3-inch LCD monitor and has a well constructed metal body. For the market it is designed for it would be a good choice. That ended a most interesting evening.

#### **...and for the rest of 2009?**

Whilst our regular stalwarts show their expertise at our various demos and hands-on workshops at our monthly meetings, we definitely need more input from other members.

Do you have a particular expertise in a computer related subject that you could talk about? If so please let us know — we need variety and not the same old faces each month — thanks.

# April Funnies and a bit of Scandal

In April Norman Risbridger our late Chairman was in the habit of sending me some pictures he'd picked up for publishing in ROM as April-Fool's jokes. Trouble is that they weren't always jokes but illustrations of real-life events. So I thought it worthwhile taking up his baton and having a go at finding those odd photos and stories that can bring a smile to one's face. So let's start with a topical subject.

## Snouts in the Trough

Are our MPs making a determined effort to displace bankers as our favourite villains? To look at how they've been abusing their expense allowances, you'd certainly think so. For example Labour MP Harry Cohen has bagged a second homes allowance by naming a seaside caravan as his main residence; employment minister Tony McNulty has been claiming for a house occupied by his parents. And to cap it all, we now find that Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has charged the cost of two porn films, watched by her husband, to the Exchequer.

For a woman who never stops banging on about the sex industry's exploitation of women, that alone should get her sacked, but the porn movies are a ten quid sideshow when seen against the incredible list of things for which Smith has been reimbursed. She must spend all her day ferreting in her handbag for "every crumpled receipt" for which she can claim. She made us pay £1,000 for an antique fireplace; then she charged us for the coal she burned in it. She claimed for not one, but two giant LCD tellys; not one, but two washing machines. She claimed for an 88p bath plug. She even claimed (£550 as it happens) for her kitchen sink. Then she gets £23,000 a year for pretending her sister's house is her main home, and another £40,000 to pay her husband, when he isn't watching porn, to be her constituency organiser. But it says everything about our Home Secretary, keeper of the nation's morals, because who else in a megabuck expenses bill of £116,000 would itemise 88p for a bath plug?

To the voter, struggling to make ends meet during a recession, all this is deeply repellent. "Sometimes it feels as if the entire political establishment has its snout so deeply jammed in the trough of taxpayers' money that you can barely see its little curly tail," said a report in the Daily Mail. Yet despite the public disgust at such abuses, the Government's only concern is to launch an investigation into the mole that has apparently been trying to flog a record of all MP expenses for £300,000. Parliament's Committee on Standards in Public Life is going to wait until September before looking at the issue and in the meantime MPs have just nodded through a pay rise for themselves of 2.3%.

Personally I don't think our



MPs are much worse behaved than previously; they've always had their snouts in the trough and the papers that "named and shamed" Jacqui Smith's spouse for watching blue movies aren't averse to exploiting sex themselves, one in fact is part of a group that sells "adult entertainment"!

But human nature is such that baying for blood allows us to feel virtuous and forget that our entire society has been acquisitive and greedy the past few years.

## Overweight & On Show

Did you see that the fat girl who turned up for her X Factor audition looking like a cross between Miss Haversham and a badly made trifle, has been bleating in the papers, along with her equally obese family, about the difficulties of getting by on a mere £22,000 a year in benefits. Apparently 19-year-old Emma Chawner (5ft 3in, 17st), sister Sam (21, 5ft 9in, 18st) and parents Phillip (53) and Audrey (57), both 24st, are all "too fat to work" because of a claimed hereditary problem.

Asked why they didn't simply go on a diet, Mr Chawner said, "We don't have the time," adding: "We love TV. It's on from the moment



we get up. Often I'm so tired from watching TV, I have to take a nap." Yes, I bet you do.

Emma says: "I'm a student and don't have time to exercise. We all want to lose weight to stop the abuse we get in the street, but we don't know how."

Let me give you a clue, Emma. Eat less, do more. It's not exactly rocket science, is it? And give the microwave pies a miss, even if you did once buy some pears "but they tasted funny"....Gordon Bennett!

## ..and finally

...and finally. I haunt, if that's the right verb, Straightdope.com, a site that offers the answers to everything, well almost everything and thought I should share with you this hilarious letter:

Quote :

"Long story short: My dear old mum got a letter from a hotel she stayed at - in Reykjavik. She paid the bill presented, and apparently had no trouble dealing with them in English."

"Fast forward to now, more than a year after she stayed there. A mysterious letter with the hotel's emblem appears. It is written in Icelandic (we assume; I don't speak it or anything like it)."

The letter.

Viðtakandi

Sofnunarsjóður lifeyrirtinda

Borgartuni 29, 105 Reykjavik- 5

Simi: 510 - 7400, Fax: 510-7401 (ok, I understood this). Samtals 109.420

Yndi Hótel : ÉG er mjög hryggur fyrir having troðningur einn af þinn ungur áll og þinn handklæði. ÉG er fiskflak með skömm og samviskubit. Þú vilja vera glaður til vita þessi ÉG póstlagður the lík ( umbúðir í handklæði með þinn nafnplata ) til vísindamaður á the Smithsonian Stofnun. Síðan þeir okrari frá the eigur , ÉG hafa flutningamiðlari þinn bréf til þá; ÉG er viss þeir vilja gefa eftir þú the \$105 mjög bráðum. Þinn , bros stigamaður

And as translated Word for word by an Icelandic speaker:

"Loving hotel. I am most sad for having stampe one of your young aluminium and your towel. I am a fish filet with shame and guilty conscience. You want to be happy to know that I posted the dead body (packing in towel with your nameplate) to scientist at the Smithsonian Institute. Then they "corrupted" (okrari) from us the ownership. I have transport agent your letter to them. I am sure they will give in you the \$105 very soon. Yours smile highwayman (aka smiling bandit)."

It's not often that I end up with tears running down the face, but this is one such occasion! — Ed.

...now enjoy the funny pictures!





We offer three kinds of service:  
**GOOD - CHEAP - FAST**  
You can pick any two  
GOOD service CHEAP won't be FAST  
GOOD service FAST won't be CHEAP  
FAST service CHEAP won't be GOOD





# Diskeeper 2009

Some of the features referred to below were mentioned in last December's ROM, so apologies if you think you've read it before! But as I've had a look at the 2009 version, the key features communicated by Diskeeper are worth repeating to put my review comments into perspective.



## New Diskeeper 2009 Released

1. Real-Time Defragmentation automatically handles performance-robbing fragmentation as it occurs. There is no need for scheduling or manual defrag.
2. I-FAAST 2.0 (Intelligent File Access Acceleration Sequencing Technology) which boosts access speed for the files most frequently used (by 10%- 80%).
3. Free Space Defragmentation Engine that has been enhanced to increase file-write performance.
4. Low Free Space Defrag Engine that ensures that even when you have less than 1% free space you can still defragment your volumes.
5. Terabyte Volume Engine 2.0 which defragments volumes with hundreds of thousand and millions of files, quickly and thoroughly (1).
6. Frag Shield 2.0 that boosts reliability by automatically preventing crash-inducing fragmentation of critical system files.
7. InvisiTasking which ensures no resource conflict whatsoever while performing the above operations.
8. Titan Defrag Engine technology that has been built to defragment multi-terabyte volumes even faster and more thoroughly than ever before. Titan is the only defrag solution powerful enough to handle volumes at 10–20 plus terabytes (2).
9. MOM/SCOM integration. Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM) and Systems Center Operations Manager (SCOM) allow monitoring and management of computers interconnected by networks. Diskeeper provides MOM/SCOM with numerous alerts, reports and the ability to manage and control product settings and configurations.

Notes:

- (1) In all Diskeeper Pro Premier editions.
- (2) Enterprise Server edition only

## Diskeeper 2009 In Use

Readers will know how in the past I've enthused over the features of Diskeeper;

previous versions reviewed being Diskeeper 2007 and 2008, so how does Diskeeper 2009 measure up to its predecessors?

The very latest version comes with a very new feature called HyperFast. HyperFast is a file system based solution intended to optimise NAND Flash devices. The new Solid State Drives (SSDs) which are increasingly being installed in small Netbooks as a low-power and small size alternatives to conventional disk-based hard drives and USB flash drives; these are based on NAND Flash technology.

I've not heard of HyperFast before so had to do some research as to exactly what it is designed to do. According to Diskeeper: "HyperFast creates and maintains optimized free space, increasing the controller's ability to write sequentially and thereby enormously increasing the peak speed and life of the SSD."

Diskeeper says its HyperFast technology makes sure that files are written to solid-state drives in a sequential order. This reduces the overall number of write/erase routines that need to run and should lead to higher performance and a greater lifespan. The company boasts that reads can be up to 5.9 times faster and writes up to 19.5 times faster.

HyperFast is currently available as an add-on (bundled product) option to any edition of Diskeeper 2009, except the HomeServer version. The Diskeeper 2009 (Home/Professional/Pro Premier) with HyperFast bundle will routinely detect any Flash-based drive and automatically apply HyperFast.

Apart from USB memory sticks I have no SSD drives and have no way of knowing how well or otherwise the HyperFast technology works, but am a little skeptical as to its practical uses. However, I'll keep an open mind and if I ever get a netbook will let you know how I get on.

Apart from I-FAAST 2.0 (Intelligent File Access Acceleration Sequencing Technology) which boosts access speed for the files most frequently used (by 10%- 80%). There is not too much that is radically different to Diskeeper 2008. The new 2009 version works as well as its predecessors and is an indispensable tool for keeping your hard disks in perfect defragmented order and remains a very good buy.

## A Reminder of Diskeeper 2009's Features:

- **Fully Automatic Operation.** Diskeeper is designed to operate without your intervention. Simply install Diskeeper, then sit back and let it take care of the details. Of course, you can also run Diskeeper manually. (But you probably have better things to do with your time. That's what Automatic Defragmentation with InvisiTasking is for!)

- **Descriptive Console Interface.** The Diskeeper console provides an intuitive and informative defragmentation experience. Common commands are grouped together in the Quick Launch pane, and a group of tabbed panes show you a wide variety of information. Diskeeper shows you the condition of your disks, and provides suggestions for improving or maintaining your disks.
- **Performance and Volume Health Analysis.** Diskeeper collects and displays data regarding the performance and overall health of your volumes in the Dashboard tab. This information allows you to be more proactive in the management and maintenance of your computers.
- **Boot-Time Defragmentation.** Defragment files at boot-time that cannot be moved safely when Windows is running.
- **Event Logging.** Diskeeper records information about its activity in two ways. First, general information about previously-run defragmentation job is shown in the Log tab within the Diskeeper console. Additional information can also be stored in a log file. A wide variety of information can be saved for future reference.

## Other Things About Diskeeper

- When running Diskeeper in Automatic mode, you can run other tasks while defragmentation is occurring.
- With the exception of boot-time operations, Diskeeper runs as a Windows Service and it optionally logs useful defragmentation information into the Windows Application Event Log.
- Diskeeper can be uninstalled in the standard manner using the Add/Remove Programs applet in the Windows Control Panel.
- Due to limits built into Windows 2000, Diskeeper cannot defragment files on NTFS volumes on Windows 2000 systems with a cluster size greater than 4KB (4096 bytes), except during Boot-Time Defragmentation. This limitation has been removed in Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows Home Server, and Windows Server 2003, where Diskeeper can defragment NTFS volumes with cluster sizes of up to 64 kilobytes. *Note the boot-time defragmentation operations are not affected by this limit.*
- By default, you must be logged into an account that is a member of the Administrators group to run Diskeeper. Diskeeper Professional and Pro Premier editions can be set to allow non-Administrators to run Diskeeper.

The provided review copy was the

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

downloadable Pro Premier version but there is no difference between the boxed and downloadable version apart from the absence of a CD, so once downloaded and to avoid conflicts I uninstalled the previous version and ran the setup file. All went well and in a couple of minutes and with a re-boot it was up and running.

I've been using Diskeeper for a couple of years now and until the arrival of the 2008 version I'd relied on Diskeeper 2007 to keep my hard-disks defragmented, and it had done so with absolutely no trouble at all, the Diskeeper automatic defragging process works like a dream. Previously I'd relied on either the Norton Utilities Speed-Disk utility or the Windows Defrag utility.

Both work reasonably well but both can take an age to run, but Diskeeper just works away in the background leaving your hard disks at their optimum operating condition.

It's technically hard to explain exactly how Diskeeper goes about its business, but the features listed above plus the screen shots on the next page show the options available and results obtainable when using Diskeeper's various defragging actions

### Pricing & Availability

Diskeeper 2009 Pro Single Pack from internet suppliers for around £31 inc VAT plus delivery. Or downloadable from Diskeeper at:

<http://www.diskeeper.com/> for:

Diskeeper 2009 Home Edition £23.76

Diskeeper 2009 Home Edition - with HyperFast £43.60

Diskeeper 2009 Professional Edition £47.60

Diskeeper 2009 Professional Edition - with HyperFast £67.40

Diskeeper 2009 Pro Premier Edition £95.20

Diskeeper 2009 Pro Premier Edition - with HyperFast £115.03

Diskeeper 2009 HomeServer Edition £55.50

Currently all the above are on special offer with a 15% discount, see the site for details.

A free trial is also available from the same site.

## Freebies from MAGIX

From easy multimedia slideshows to creative disc labels, new applications help users have fun and express themselves through music and photos

London – March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 – MAGIX, a leader in multimedia software, releases a new set of freeware tools designed to help people express themselves by creating web-based slideshows, distorting their favourite pictures, creating labels for their discs, and uploading their own music to MySpace.

The new freeware releases include:

- Music Maker for MySpace for direct upload of personal music to social networks.

<http://www.magixmusicwidgets.com/magix-music-maker-for-myspace-6.html>

- Slideshow Maker for creating multimedia slideshows

<http://www.magixphotowidgets.com/magix-slideshow-maker-1.html>

- FunPix Maker for fun photo editing

<http://www.magixphotowidgets.com/magix-funpix-maker-12.html>

- Xtreme Print Studio for making covers for DVD's and CD's

<http://www.magixwidgets.com/magix-xtreme-print-studio-17.html>

Registration is required for the four programs listed, but after registration the programs are free.

As an example here is what MAGIX say about the CD / DVD cover maker:

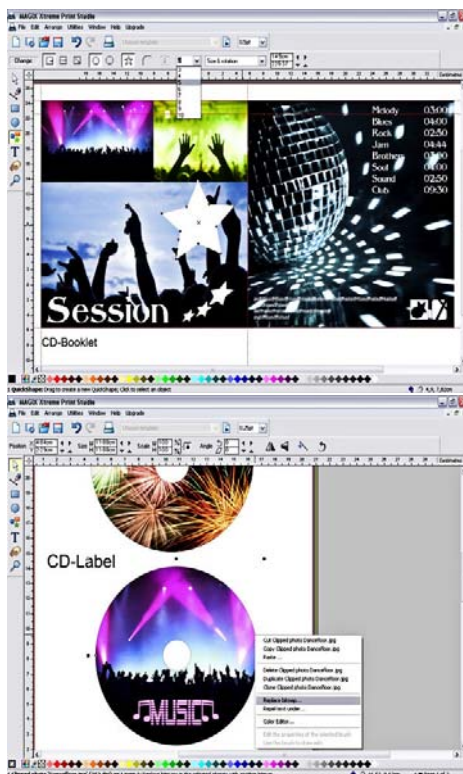
### MAGIX Xtreme Print Studio

Create matching covers, labels, inlays, and booklets for CDs and DVDs in a flash!

MAGIX Xtreme Print Studio is the ideal program for unique CD/DVD cases and

labels. Quickly and easily design and print labels, covers, inlays, and booklets. Even complete track listings, shapes, and lines can be added. This free program perfectly rounds off the look of your homemade CDs and DVDs!

### Quickly and Easily Design Matching Covers & Labels!



- Select the type of project or format
- Add and design images, text, and graphics
- Print covers, labels, and inlays

Whether covers for music CDs, movies, title images for videos or slideshows, or a label for your backup copies, MAGIX

Xtreme Print Studio makes it all possible! This freeware accepts images and graphics that were made by you, scanned in, or downloaded from the Internet. If the photo has been embedded already, it's easy to convert it to the format you need.

### Organise your homemade CDs and DVDs

Masses of homemade CDs and DVDs quickly pile up, and it becomes more and more difficult to keep an overview. With MAGIX Xtreme Print Studio, the days of hand-labelled discs are finally over. In a flash, matching CD cases and labels can be created.

### System Requirements (Minimum)

- Microsoft Windows XP or Vista
- PC with Intel Pentium or AMD Athlon (1 GHz, or higher)
- Minimum of 512 Mb RAM
- Minimum of 100 Mb free drive space for program files; for video files min. 1 GB (5 GB recommended)
- Microsoft-compatible mouse
- SVGA graphics card with minimum of 32 Mb RAM

MAGIX Xtreme Print Studio supports the following formats:

- JPG, BMP.



# Ricoh R10 Digital Camera

Tested by John Childs

## Introduction

This camera will appeal to consumers wanting an easy to use camera which can be carried around in a pocket or handbag. It has a list of features, which I will comment on below. First impressions are that it is not as compact as many cameras, but seems solidly made and is not too bulky. Its features are: -

- 10 mega pixel sensor
- 28 to 200mm lens (35mm equivalent)
- Macro focus as close as 1cm
- Huge 3" LCD screen on the back.

Various shooting modes (easy mode, auto mode, and various scene modes.

- Movie mode.
- ISO settings from 80 to 1600 ISO.
- Built in image stabilisation

Having opened the box, I was disconcerted to learn that the programs provided on the CD could be used only on a Windows computer. I was therefore unable to test the programs as I use Mac machines. However, it was easy to get the images from the camera onto my computer, and I used Photoshop CS2 to print them. Also the review sample did not come with an SD card on which to record images in the camera. My cameras use Compact Flash Cards, which are of no use with the Ricoh, so I had to rely on the internal memory of 54 mega pixels.

The camera produces images of 3648 by 2736 pixels resulting in jpeg files of 28.6 megabytes when opened in Photoshop. Images are embedded with the sRGB profile. The camera does not output RAW files nor are other profiles catered for.

It is not possible to select apertures or shutter speeds manually, as befits a camera aimed at the general consumer market. Along with the vast majority of such cameras there is no optical viewfinder; an omission I deplore because in bright sunlight the screen is almost impossible to see clearly.

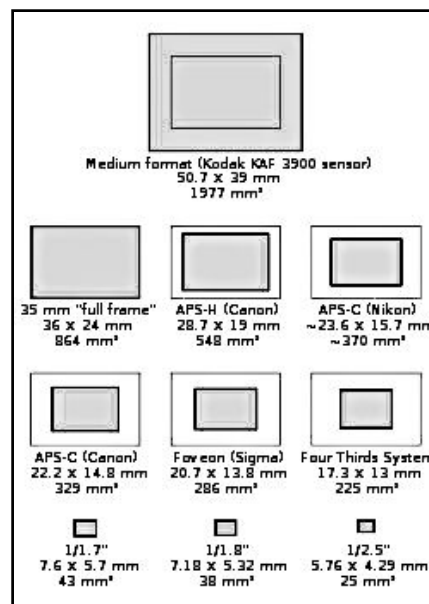
## In Use

The camera was quite satisfying to use at first with the control knob and buttons being easy to operate. However, the lack of a viewfinder annoyed me and I personally would never buy a camera without one.

These days more and more pixels are being crammed onto very small sensors and this trend is obviously a marketing tool to help sell these cameras. My own cameras, which have much larger sensors, have 10 and 12 mega pixel sensors respectively. I print quite a lot of images at A3 size for camera club competitions. With a little bit of care, it is quite possible to produce A3 prints from 6 mega pixel cameras but the



extra mega pixels mean that I can crop images quite a bit and still have a print with acceptable sharpness. I cannot see that the buyers of the Ricoh will be producing many A3 prints and therefore the extra mega pixels are effectively wasted. Cameras such as this Ricoh have very small sensors. In this Ricoh camera It is a 1/1.75" sensor. Below is a graphic showing popular sensor sizes:-



You will see that, whilst there is not a 1/1.75" size listed there are two close ones shown. Just compare the size with the 35mm full frame one shown! You might ask why this matters as there are still 10 mega pixels on the Ricoh camera. The answer lies in the fact that the photo-sizes on the smaller sensors are much smaller than on the larger sensors and therefore the light falls onto a smaller area and the resulting electrical signal has to be amplified much more. This results in "noise" appearing in the images. The higher the ISO selected, the worse the noise gets. On professional Nikon and Canon cameras, noise is very well controlled at high ISO ratings, but the same cannot be said of compact cameras. The

Ricoh may have ISO speeds selectable up to 1600 but you would not want to go above 400!

The macro facility is excellent, and I had some fun with it. Below I show an image of part of a pound coin. I was very impressed with its sharpness.

I took a landscape image from my front door and the sharpness, using the image stabiliser, was very good.

There was a little magenta colour fringing around the branches of the trees but this was only obvious at high magnifications.

There is a video function and I played with this for a while. I was able to record short sequences (due to the lack of a memory card) and to import them onto my iMac computer using iMovie, a program supplied as part of the Mac operating system.



An excellent Macro facility — witness this macro image of the edge of a one pound coin.

## Conclusion

This is a sturdy and well laid out camera, which to my regret lacks an optical viewfinder. I could not process the images it produces using the Windows only programs provided by Ricoh. However, using Photoshop CS2 I was a little unhappy with the colours of the prints I produced, but if I was prepared to spend longer than I had available, I am sure I could have altered various parameters in Photoshop to produce better colours in the end. The lack of the relevant Ricoh program did not stop me from playing with the video facility, either.

All in all, I wouldn't choose to buy this camera as it lacks a viewfinder and also Mac programs. I cannot say whether it is better value than the competition, as there are so many compact cameras out there to compare it with, and the important thing to do is to look at a selection and choose the one which you are comfortable handling, and which comes at the price you are prepared to pay.

## Availability

The Ricoh R10 costs £199 from your usual supplier.

# Norton Utilities 14

Reviewed by Tony Hawes

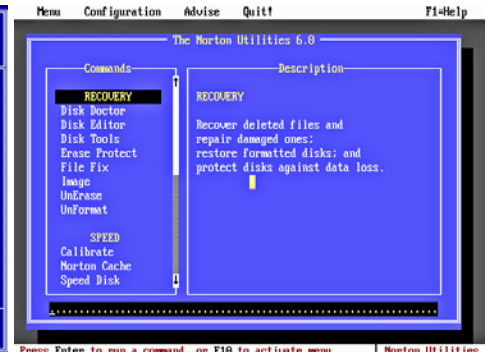
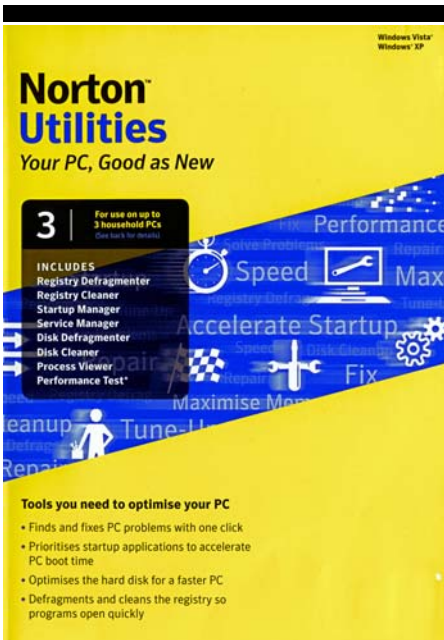


Fig. 1 — History! — Norton Utilities' screens as they appeared 12-years ago

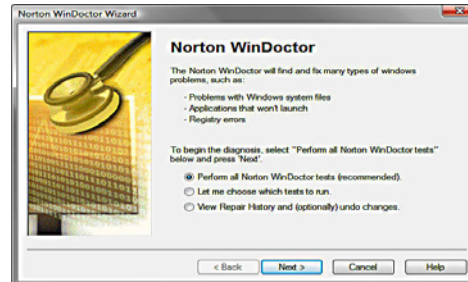
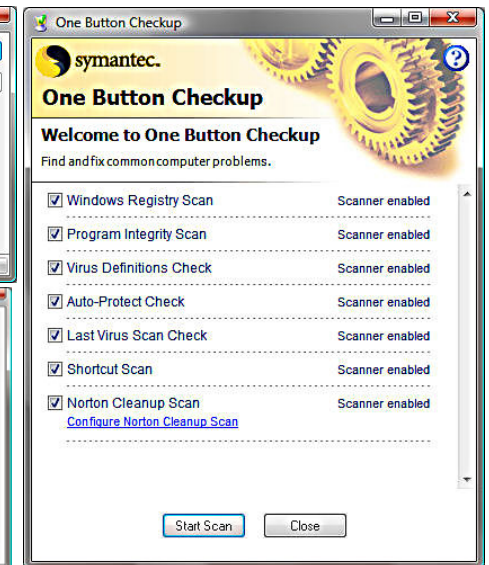


Fig. 2 — Norton Utilities as it appeared as part of Norton SystemWorks until last year

When I heard that Symantec were about to launch a new version of Norton Utilities (NU) I was chuffed. As someone who relied on Peter Norton's Utilities from the beginning of the computer revolution way back when DOS reigned supreme, the chance to test a new version of NU was an attractive proposition.

## Background

According to Wikipedia it was in 1982 that Peter Norton accidentally deleted an important file and wrote the crucial UNERASE utility to get it back. UNERASE became the central attraction of the wildly popular Norton Utilities collection. Peter Norton Computing was taken over by Symantec in 1990 and Norton Utilities continued to be developed by Symantec as a stand-alone application until 2005, when it was absorbed into and became an essential part of Norton SystemWorks.

Norton Utilities 14 marks the return of the Norton Utilities name, but if you used Norton Utilities in the past or used SystemWorks you'll find that the new version is totally different as it is now based on the technology previously in PC Tools, the company acquired by Symantec early last year. Using PC Tools technology NU 14 is now primarily geared to fixing and optimising your system.

## What Does Norton- Utilities Deliver?

Norton- Utilities provides the essential tools you need to optimise the performance of your PC.

It finds and fixes common PC problems, frees up disk space, reclaims system memory, accelerates start-up time, and boosts

application and system performance. It opens applications faster, and lets you run more of them simultaneously. Unlike other PC tune-up software, Norton Utilities focuses 100% on performance. It prioritises your start-up applications and Microsoft's Windows' services for faster system boot. Management tools and the included Performance Test let you view, compare, and tweak your PC's performance according to your needs. Norton Utilities can help make your PC run like new again. (Claims from Symantec).

## Key Technology

1. Registry Defragmenter
2. Registry Cleaner
3. Start-up Manager
4. Service Manager
5. Disk Defragmenter
6. Disk Cleaner
7. Disk Bleacher
8. Restore Center
9. System Optimiser
10. Process Viewer
11. Performance Test

## Key Features

- Defragments disk for faster performance
- Frees up disk space – boosts performance
- Removes cookies, temporary files, Internet clutter
- Lets you view current Windows processes for maximum performance
- Purges unwanted security-sensitive data
- Automatically benchmarks performance to optimum standards

## In Use

Installation is straightforward and needs the entry of a 32-digit Product Key and on-line activation. Once installed NU 14's many features are organised into four main panels: Optimize, Monitor, Windows Tools, and Administer (see the screens on the page opposite).

Using the "Optimize" tab, NU 14 carries out an analysis as to what particular function can be optimised, when it comes to cleaning out the Registry it's analysis lists problems found and asks for permission to proceed. In my case it identified 205 problems and I let it automatically correct the errors found.

(Continued on page 11)





Fig. 3 — Optimise Options

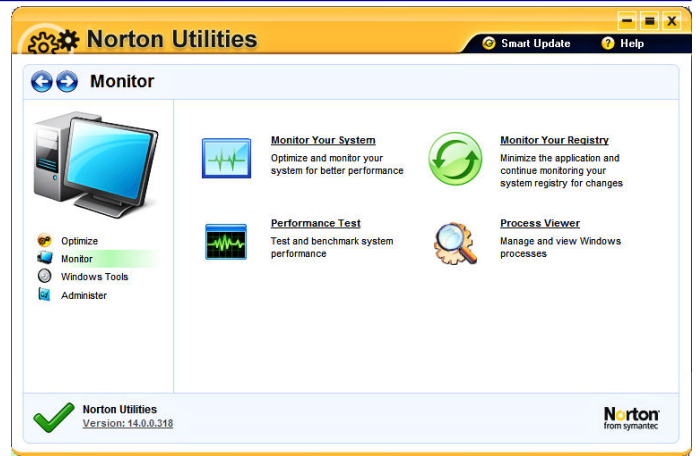


Fig. 4 — Monitor Options



Fig. 5 — Windows Tools Options



Fig. 6 — Administer Tools Options

(Continued from page 10)

The disk defragmenter in SystemsWorks was Symantec's "Speed Disk", this has been dropped in Norton Utilities 14 and now disk defragmentation is invoked by simply clicking a button and the process starts automatically, what is not immediately obvious is that Norton Utilities 14 defragger is in fact Windows' own built-in defragmentation utility, with no sign of Norton's Speed Disk!

"Clean Your Disks" also in the Optimise category, suggests how to clean up your computer and browsing history. Among the items that can be erased are various temporary files, the cache, history, cookies, and other history files of your browsing in Internet Explorer (and other browsers that I don't use). It can also delete the most recently used file lists for dozens of other programs installed on your computer.

"Manage Your Start-up" does exactly that with a much easier to use interface (see Fig. 7 above) than that afforded by running the "MSCONFIG" menu available from start/run on your desktop, but inexperienced user's beware as "Manage Your Start-up" doesn't offer advice as to which tasks should or shouldn't be run at start-up.

### Windows Tools

Norton Utilities 14 offers tools to monitor your computer with links to fourteen Windows tools that you could just as easily

access via the start menu/accessories/system tools of your computer without help from Norton Utilities. However, listed as they are, they provide a quick link for access to these applications. A more useful tool is Process Viewer which is an improved version of Windows Task Manager, which as well as listing all the running processes, offers additional details not listed by Task Manager. If you consider yourself an expert, Process Viewer offers a detailed in-depth report of each running process

### Overall

I expected Norton Utilities 14 to be a worthy successor to SystemWorks, but was disappointed. SystemWorks "one-button" check-up couldn't be beaten for keeping a computer in top-notch running order and for raw novices was a superb and safe tool. Sadly many of the tools "included" in Norton Utilities 14 provide no more than shortcuts to already installed Windows enhancing tools, which is a bit mean for a program costing around £30. Symantec sweeten the pill a little by licensing it to run on three computers, but overall I'm not convinced it is an advance on SystemWorks, which did more and needed far less user intervention.

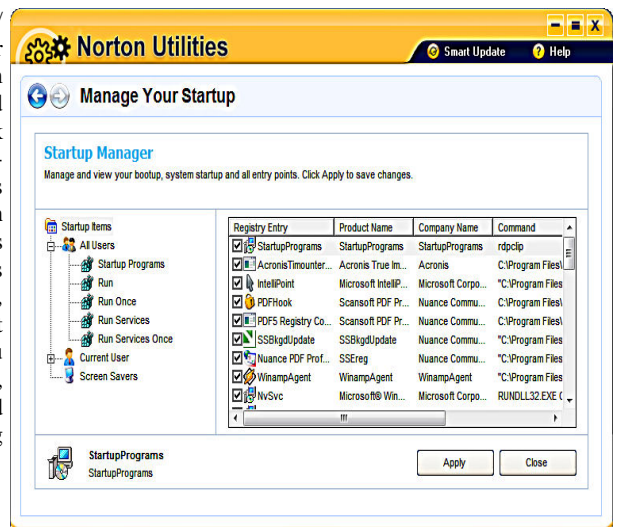


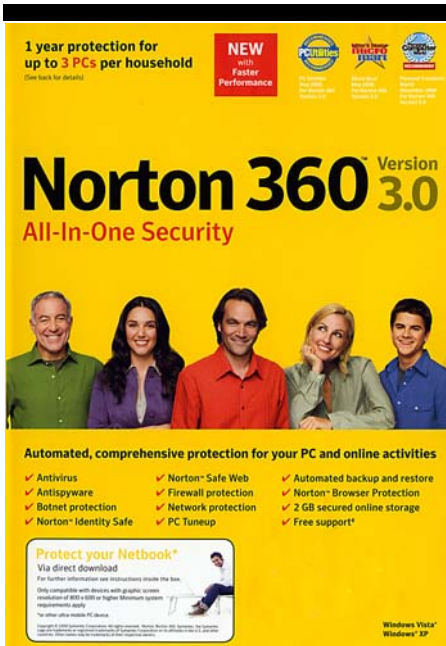
Fig. 7 — Manage Your Start-up

Just as I was finishing my review Symantec released Norton 360 Version 3.0. This includes some features of Norton Utilities 14, but is designed for the general home user rather than an expert. Next page shows what's new in Norton 360 Version 3.0 from Symantec's Press Release. A review will follow.

### Pricing and Availability

Licensed for 1 user on 3 computers Norton Utilities 14 is available now from Amazon.co.uk for £29.99 inc free delivery.

# Preview — Norton 360 Version 3.0



I mentioned that Symantec were about to launch Norton 360 V3.0. This statement below of 360 v3.0's features is from Symantec.

## Why Choose Norton 360?

Norton 360 Version 3.0 offers proven performance, delivering today's fastest and lightest all-in-one solution for protecting your PC and all your online activities. It protects against viruses, worms, hackers, and botnets, safeguards against online identity theft, protects important files, and keeps your PC tuned and running at peak performance. Completely automated and easy to use, Norton 360 works quietly in the background, with virtually no impact on PC performance, to provide comprehensive protection for everything computer users care about. By offering an unmatched combination of performance and protection, it helps you get the most out of your PC and your online experience.

Norton 360 Version 3.0 offers proven performance, delivering today's fastest and lightest all-in-one solution for protecting your PC and all your online activities. Click to enlarge.

**New—Ultra fast and super light performance.** Norton 360 Version 3.0 is the fastest and lightest all-in-one PC protection solution available on the market today. It delivers industry-leading protection for your PC and all your online activities while using significantly fewer system resources, so it won't slow you down:

- Start-up time is less than 1 minute.
- Scans take less than 3 minutes.
- It uses less than 10 MB of memory.

**New—Rapid installation** gets you up and running quickly in less than 1 minute.

**New—Norton Pulse Updates** deliver up-

Norton 360™ Version 3.0 offers proven performance, delivering today's fast and light all-in-one solution for protecting your PC and all your online activities. Completely automated and easy to use, it protects against viruses, worms, hackers, and botnets; guards against online identity theft; protects important files; keeps your PC tuned and running at peak performance; and includes 2 GB of secured online storage.		Norton 360™	Norton™ Internet Security	Norton™ Antivirus
The right Norton solution for you	Comprehensive control at your fingertips	✓	✓	
	Automated set-it-and-forget-it protection	✓	✓	
	Automated antivirus and antispyware	✓	✓	✓
Core Security	Protects against viruses, spyware, trojan horses, worms, bots, and rootkits	✓	✓	✓
	Stops threats at point of entry with a quiet two-way firewall	✓	✓	✓
	Provides continuous automatic protection against new threats	✓	✓	✓
	Reduces scan time with smart scanning, so you can work and play uninterrupted	✓	✓	✓
Advanced Security	Protects against web-based attacks that use vulnerabilities in your browser	✓	✓	✓
	Protects against the latest threats with a proactive, multilayered protection system	✓	✓	✓
	Prevents others from taking control of your PC and using it to attack other PCs	✓	✓	✓
Identity Protection	Inspects websites to make sure they're not fakes	✓	✓	
	Automatically detects, stores, and secures passwords and personal information	✓	✓	
	Guards against online identity theft	✓	✓	
Networking	Identifies unsafe websites and suspicious sellers so you can surf and shop with confidence	✓		
	Helps secure and monitor your home network	✓	✓	✓
Backup	Automatically secures your PC when connecting to public wireless hotspots	✓	✓	✓
	Protects valuable files from computer disaster	✓		
PC Tuneup	Restores damaged or deleted files and folders	✓		
	Includes 2 GB of secured online storage service*	✓		
	Automatically finds and fixes problems that slow your computer	✓		
Support	Helps optimise PC performance by removing unwanted disk clutter and registry files	✓		
	Analyses your system and provides tips on how to keep your PC running smoothly	✓		
	Provides free chat or phone support*	✓	✓	✓
	AutoFix technology will diagnose and fix common problems for you	✓	✓	✓

\*Requires high-speed Internet access; 2 GB of online storage included, with option to purchase more.

to-the-minute protection against new threats every 5 to 15 minutes.

**New—Norton Insight** scans only those files at risk, saving time and dramatically improving protection with faster, fewer, shorter scans.

**New—Smart Start-up Manager** turns off unnecessary programs to accelerate PC start-up time. It automatically performs tasks in the background and during PC idle time to eliminate interruptions and minimize any impact on PC performance.

**Flexible, automated, and easy-to-use backup and restore** capabilities protect photos, music, documents, and other important files from loss.

**Norton Safe Web** identifies unsafe websites and suspicious sellers so you can surf and shop with confidence. Protects against Web-based attacks that use vulnerabilities in your browser to infect your PC.

## Industry-leading PC security

Our latest virus, spyware, botnet, firewall, and network protection technologies protect you and your PC at all times.

**New—Botnet detection.** Prevents others from taking control of your PC to access your private information or use it to host an attack on other PCs.

**New—Norton Safe Web.** Identifies unsafe websites and suspicious sellers so you can surf and shop with confidence.

**Norton Identity Safe.** Identifies fraudulent websites and validates authentic ones to protect your identity when you buy, bank, and browse online.

**Password Manager.** Automatically detects, stores, and secures logins and passwords so you can have highly secure passwords without having to remember them.

**Secure, one-click login.** Conveniently and securely fills in online forms at your request and submits logins and passwords to your frequently visited sites while blocking eavesdropping programs like keystroke loggers.

**Browser Protection.** Protects against Web-based attacks that use vulnerabilities in your browser to infect your PC.

**New—Norton Pulse Updates.** Provide continuous protection against new threats automatically.

**Automated backup and restore.** Flexible, automated, and easy-to-use backup and restore capabilities protect photos, music, documents, and other important files from loss.

- Includes 2 GB of secured online storage (with option to purchase more) (requires high-speed internet access).
- Easy-to-use set-and-forget features automatically back up your valuable files to a local hard drive or secured online site according to the schedule you set.
- New—Norton Drive lets you queue up

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

important files to be backed up whenever your computer is idle, so backups won't get in the way of your computing experience.

- Supports a variety of local backup destinations, including external hard drives, Blu-ray Disc, HD-DVD, and iPod.

**Network monitoring.** Protects your network and alerts you when you connect to an unsecured wireless network.

**PC Tune up.** Automatically cleans up unnecessary Internet clutter and temporary files, defragments your hard drive, and optimizes and maintains your PC to keep it running at peak performance.

**New—Diagnostic recommendation.** Checks your PC to fix common problems

and provides recommendations to help you make your PC run better.

**New—Smart Start-up Manager.** Turns off unnecessary start-up programs so your PC starts up faster.

**Free 24/7 support.** Provides easy, one-click access to expert support at no charge via email, live chat, or on the phone.

**Monthly report.** Shows the details of your PC's activities, such as threats caught, tune-up tasks performed, and files backed up.

**Ongoing protection.** Keeps your computer protected from the latest Internet risks by automatically renewing your subscription at the regular subscription price (plus applicable tax), so you don't have to do it.

**New—Real-time SONAR** (Symantec

Online Network for Advanced Response. Detects emerging spyware and viruses before traditional cures are available.

**Network map.** Provides a visual picture of your network and each device connected to it, allowing you to view the security status of all Norton products on the network.

**Optional anti-spam and parental controls** are available for easy download via the Norton Add-on Pack.

## Pricing & Availability

Norton 360 Version 3.0 is available now from Amazon.co.uk for £39.99 including free delivery and is licensed for 1 user on 3 computers.

A review will follow in the next issue of ROM.

## New From Doro

Members will recall that last December in ROM I gave a good review to a mobile telephone from Doro, their HandleEasy 338gsm, designed specifically for those who want an easy to use mobile with large buttons and large and easy to read text displays.

Doro have now announced a new range of easy to use mobiles as in the press release below.

### Five New Easy-to-Use Mobiles From Doro

*Growth in sales of simple handsets bucking economic downturn*

*Easily customisable handsets now available to UK customers*

London: The first three of Doro's latest mobile phone range are now available for sale in UK stores and online. These are the Doro PhoneEasy 338gsm, 342gsm and 345gsm. The new handsets have been designed to provide simple, good-looking, easy-to-use mobiles. The fourth and fifth

handsets in the new series will hit the UK high street in June – the Doro HandlePlus 334gsm the Doro PhoneEasy 410gsm. The 410 is Doro's first clamshell handset which it brings ergonomic design and flip-phone style to the range.

Chris Millington, MD of Doro UK said: "2008 was a real breakthrough year for us in the mobile phone market. We received a number of prestigious awards and reported good growth. However, most enjoyable is the flood of positive feedback from our customers. In our new range we've taken this feedback onboard and proudly present five new easy-to-use mobile phones."

It is now possible to add or remove functions to Doro mobiles directly, with ease, from the main menu. This creates a totally bespoke mobile environment for people who require a simple handset. In recent years Doro has invested heavily in making consumer electronics easier to use - and therefore more accessible – especially for senior citizens.

The range has been developed in collaboration with renowned design firm Ergonomidesign. The focus is on creating simple, user-friendly phones for the needs of different target groups – which can be easily personalised to better suit the needs of each individual user.

Millington concluded: "These five new models will help further cement our leading position in the easy-to-use mobile phone market. Doro has the widest, most modern and adapted range for anyone who wants a simple good looking mobile phone."

The phones have favourite functions like SMS, FM radio and an integrated torch. Hearing-aid compatibility has also been upgraded and further developed across the entire range

The complete range of Doro mobile phones and other selected Doro Care products is available from:

[www.parkwaytelecom.co.uk/doro](http://www.parkwaytelecom.co.uk/doro) and

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Review/s to follow.



Three of five new Mobiles from Doro. Left to Right. PhoneEasy 338gsm, PhoneEasy 342gsm and PhoneEasy 345gsm.

# Acer — News and New Computers

At a press conference in London on 30th April to launch a new range of Acer computers we were told that new Acer computers shipped from 23rd of October would be equipped with Windows 7. Should you have purchased a new Acer computer in the previous 30-days a voucher would be included for a free upgrade to Windows 7.

This is the most authoritative indication yet as to the release of Windows 7 which reached Release Candidate 1 status in April and would be available as a Public Beta Download on Tuesday 5th May. Anyway back to Acer's new products.

## Unleash Your Senses and Free Your Imagination

Press releases are normally dry and devoid of emotion, but I was struck by the following press release from Acer extolling the virtues of the new Acer 5935 and 8935 laptops. For a moment I thought Barbara Cartland had been resurrected, but no, even she was too awful to be raised from the dead. But if you've ever read her "bodice ripper" novels and had she been brought back to life to write the prose to accompany a computer press release she couldn't have written anything better or more striking that what follows.

I leave you to substitute more suitable (rude?) words for those that appear in the press release!

## New Acer Aspire 8935 and 5935

Don't open your eyes, not yet. Let your fingertips explore the world of emotions inspired by the new Acer Aspire 8935 and 5935 notebooks. Caress the curved lines of the smooth polished cover that will accompany you to the discovery of the boundless display, devoid of a frame right down to the hinges. Hence the polished texture of the casing's surface that slides down to the gentle rippling of the console where wrists and palms find secure resting, with fingers ready to rebound on the shiny floating keypad. Typing has never been so comfortable. Fingers will then find their place on the middle console, where with a light touch they have total control of the world of colours and sounds created by the Aspire 8935 and 5935.

Now open your eyes and let yourself be astonished by the surprising visual experience. The LED rear-lit CineCrystal display panel with 16:9 aspect ratio in 15.6 inch and 18.4 inch formats will allow you to gather in all of the details of your favourite films and the photographs of your life with Full HD 1920x1080 resolution (Aspire 8935 only). Intense natural colours are guaranteed by a suite of image optimization technologies and from the superior quality

of contrast ratios. Even the keyboard will charm your eyes: the back-lighting will allow you to type even when the lights are down low.

Captivating audio will cull your senses to the centre stage of every scene. The third generation Dolby Home Theatre system will wrap you with high definition sounds, with True5.1 Channel surround sound; and the Acer Tuba CineBass amplifier will allow you to experience the thrill of low frequency bass effects.

"OK calm down dear" (as Michael Winner would say!) And here is what this curva-



New Acer Aspire 5935



New Acer Aspire 5935 side view showing a versatile selection of connectors: Ethernet, VGA, HDMI, e-SATA & Two USB 2 sockets.

ceous new model looks like in the flesh — so to speak!

## Beyond Mobile Computing: New Acer Aspire Timeline Series

London, 30th April 2009 – In mobile computing battery life has always been a challenge. Mobile users had to make a choice: if they wanted more battery life they had to buy a heavier system; if they wanted a lighter laptop they had to make do with shorter lasting batteries.

This has now come to an end. With the new Aspire Timeline series, Acer reached a delicate equilibrium between computer lightness and battery life, creating a series of featherweight notebooks that can give you an entire day of computing on a single charge.

The Aspire Timeline series have been specifically designed for longer battery life,

not by using a bulkier and heavier battery, but redesigning the way power is used, making the system more efficient, lighter and less harmful to the environment and more than capable to give you the bliss of more than eight hours of battery life on a single charge.

But that's not all. The Aspire Timeline notebooks come with the Acer Smart Power key, the gateway to power on-demand. The Acer Smart Power key gives you the power to decide how long the battery will last: just press the Smart Power key to boost power saving capabilities and extend your freedom. Acer Smart power expands battery life through advanced settings and takes a series of actions to reduce power consumption: diminishes the screen brightness, applies graphics card power saving settings and turns off energy consuming features. Simple and easy.

Plus, at its thinnest point the Acer Aspire Timeline is just 24mm thick (less than one inch), rising just 5 mm at its highest. Then the brushed aluminium cover with mirrored metal Acer logo, not only gives it a stylish look but also keeps weight down to an ultra-light 1.6kg (3.5lb) for the 13.3" model up to just 2.4kg (5.3lb) for the 15.6" one, making it both lighter and easier to carry around than anything comparable.

One of the main complaints people have about notebooks is that they produce heat and after a while using them on your lap becomes uncomfortable. Acer Aspire Timeline notebooks use a cooling technology designed to improve user experience. Developed in collaboration with Intel, Laminar Wall Jet exploits a technology that has been used successfully for cooling turbine blades. Through the addition of louvers to the inlet vents, the cooling air flow is redirected along the bottom side of the notebook chassis, putting fresh air precisely where it's needed to better cool the skins.

## Energy Saving

The Aspire Timeline Series is energy saving even when it's using the power adapter. Thanks to Acer Power Smart adapter, Aspire Timeline notebooks consume up 66% less than required by Energy Star: this means that it saves 1,752 watt per year, the equivalent of a 15 watt bulb to be lit for 116 days. Plus, the Power Smart adapter enters adaptive charging mode automatically when the battery is fully charged: this stops consuming energy and reduces the tear and wear on the battery.

The minimalistic look of the Aspire Timelines conceals a wealth of details designed to give you easy control over frequent operations. Touch sensitive hot keys have been integrated on the top to put feature such as WiFi, Backup and Power Smart key right at your fingertips. For easier usage, also the ODD eject button (for 14" and 15.6") has been placed on the top.

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The glossy FineTip keyboard, with larger and more spaced keys, is designed to offer an entirely new typing experience, further boosted by the unique design of the touchpad that includes a lock to avoid mis-touch when typing and touchpad button with a step design to find it easily even without looking. Also, the multi-gesture touchpad ensures a more comfortable navigation: using a circular clockwise or counter clockwise finger motion you can navigate web pages, lists of files, music playlists or photos; you can pinch to zoom-in or zoom-out in seconds with various applications; browse photos, web pages, PDF documents or media albums by sliding two fingers horizontally.

### Three Timeline Formats

The Aspire Timeline series is available in three formats, 13.3", 14" and 15.6", presenting bright, lifelike images and enhanced readability in low-light condition through Acer CineCrystal LED backlit display with true 16:9 aspect ratio, 1366X768 HD resolution, high brightness and fast response time for exceptional media playback. To let you enjoy a fully immersive entertainment, the Aspire Timeline series is equipped with Dolby Sound Room that offers a spectacular surround sound from any pair of speakers or headphones.

Born to offer ultra-mobility and total freedom, the Aspire Timeline Series comes with the most up to date communication options to keep you always in touch with your friends and business contacts: built-in Wi-Fi/WiMAX functionalities, supporting Acer SignalUp, allow full connectivity for



The slim and shiny 14" Acer Aspire Timeline 4810T. The other sizes — 13" and 15.6" have similar features

unprecedented mobility. The perfect companions for a completely wireless life, the Aspire Timelines can be specified with a choice of embedded 3G1 modules as an option.

With the integrated Acer Crystal Eye webcam, optimized for low light conditions and supporting enhanced Acer Primalite technology, you can easily set up video conferences with your business contacts or video chat with your friends.

Harnessing the latest energy efficient ultra low voltage Intel processors, based

on Intel Centrino Technology, the Aspire Timeline series comes with a choice of shared or dedicated VGA and is equipped with DDR3 system memory to breeze through multitasking requirements. Ample storage is provided by an HDD with up to 500 GB of capacity, alternatively there is support for an SSD with up to 64 GB of capacity.

For total ease of mind, Acer Backup Solution, combining Acer Backup Manager and Easy Launch Back up key, puts back up is at your fingertips. Acer Backup Manger offers flexible management, allowing you to back up your data effectively and with no hassle. Through Acer Backup Manager you can set up your backup to be performed at specific intervals, compress the files during the operation to save precious space, add a password to protect your data and choose the media where you want to backup your files: external Hard Drive, USB media or optical disk.

The Aspire Timeline series comes pre-installed with Microsoft Windows Vista Home Premium or Windows Vista Home Basic. Additional preinstalled software includes: Acer Arcade Deluxe featuring Cinema, Album, Music, Acer HomeMedia; Acer Crystal Eye; Acer GridVista; Acer GameZone; Acer Game Console; Acer Backup Manager; Acer PowerSmart Manager; Acer Recovery Management; Adobe Reader; Adobe Flash Player; Google Toolbar; Google Desktop; CyberLink PowerDirector trial version; McAfee Internet Security Suite; NTI Media Maker; Microsoft Works 9.0 with Office Home and Student 2007; Acer 3G Connection Manager (for 3G models only).

Pricing of these new computers will follow.

## Windows 7 RC1 — Now Available to Download — and Use for Free Until June 2010!

By Tony Hawes

As mentioned earlier, Windows 7 RC1 is available to download now until July, there are no restrictions on how many copies you use' and if you install it now you can use it free until 1st June next year. The only drawback is that starting next year on 1st March 2010, your PC will begin shutting down every two hours. But effectively you'll have the chance to use this OS free of charge for a year and remember Microsoft claim that RC1 (Release Candidate 1) is a stable and high-quality product, but it isn't the final release code so may have a few minor bugs.

### What you Need to Know Before you Begin:

If you've installed Windows 7 Beta on your PC, you'll need to back up your data, and do a clean installation of the RC. Then you'll need to reinstall your programs and

restore the files, settings, and other information you want to use for testing.

Whilst Microsoft consider this a stable and high-quality pre-release version of Windows, the RC is not the finished product. It could crash your computer or cause you to lose important files or information.

If you're a novice you are pretty much on your own as you test the software. You need to be comfortable setting up and troubleshooting a PC. If you have a problem, you can find a lot of help from other testers online, but Microsoft are not providing formal tech support. Before installing the software please read the two documents **Things to Know** and **Release Notes** from the Win-



Windows 7 download page for important information:

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**IMPORTANT:** The RC will expire on June 1, 2010. Starting on March 1, 2010, your PC will begin shutting down every two hours. Windows will notify you two weeks before the bi-hourly shutdowns start. To avoid interruption, you'll need to rebuild your test machine using a valid version of Windows before the software expires. You'll need to rebuild your test PC to replace the OS and reinstall all your programs and data. (To learn more, see Frequently Asked Questions also on the download page).

### Things you Need to Have Before you Start:

**Dedicated test PC:** Please don't test the RC on your primary home or business PC.

**Data backup:** The information on your PC will not be saved during installation. Back up your PC before you start, and frequently during testing. You can back up files to an external hard disk, a DVD or CD, or a network folder. (See How to back up a PC — download page again).

**Recovery disc:** A recovery disc restores your computer to its out-of-the-box state. Most computers come with one. If yours didn't, contact your PC maker.

**Antivirus program:** Make sure your antivirus program is up-to-date, run it, then disable it before installing Windows 7 RC. When you finish the installation, remember to re-enable the antivirus program.

**Internet connection:** Be sure to connect to the Internet after you finish the installation. Being connected helps make sure you get useful security and hardware updates. Microsoft recommends you keep your PC set to automatically check for updates through Windows Update.

**Data backup:** If you want to back up the PC you'll use for test, you can use the Windows Easy Transfer software included in Windows 7. Windows Easy Transfer is typically used to transfer files and settings between computers. You can also use Windows Easy Transfer to create a backup from your PC running the Windows 7 Beta to an external drive or flash drive. Then install Windows 7 RC and launch Windows Easy Transfer to re-import your data and settings. To launch Windows Easy Transfer simply open the Windows 7 Start Menu and type "easy" in the search box without quotes. Click on Windows Easy Transfer in the search results under Programs.

### Getting ready to install the Release Candidate.

What you'll need:

- A blank DVD
- A PC with a DVD burner
- A PC for testing that meets these minimum system requirements (specific to Windows 7 RC and subject to change in the final version of Windows 7):

- 1 GHz or faster 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor
- 1 GB RAM (32-bit) / 2 GB RAM (64-bit)
- 16 GB available disk space (32-bit) / 20 GB (64-bit)
- DirectX 9 graphics processor with WDDM 1.0 or higher driver

Please note: Some product features of Windows 7, such as the ability to watch and record live TV or navigate through the use of "touch," might require advanced or additional hardware.

How to install the Windows 7 RC

#### Step 1: Get the download

How to download the Windows 7 RC

- Visit the Windows 7 RC download page.
- Choose your language.
- Choose a 32-bit or 64-bit version of the RC. To see if your computer can run a 64-bit version of Windows, in Performance Information and Tools (Start>Control Panel>Performance Information and Tools) click View and print details and then look under 64-bit capable. For more information that might help with your decision, see 32-bit and 64-bit Windows:

#### Frequently asked questions.

Get a Windows 7 RC product key. (You can use the RC for 30 days without a product key, and then you'll need it for activation).

Download the Windows 7 RC.

#### Step 2: Create an installation DVD

How to create an installation DVD

The RC download is an ISO file, which you'll need to burn onto a blank disc before you can install it. To do that, you'll need to use software designed for burning ISO files.

In addition to commercial ISO burning software like Nero or Roxio Creator, there are free programs such as ISO Buster and Active ISO Burner. To find one, go to a site such as Download.com or Tucows and search for "ISO," "DVD," and "burn".

Follow the instructions that came with your program to create a Windows 7 RC installation disc.

#### Step 3: Install the Windows 7 RC

How to install the Windows 7 RC

You'll need to do a "clean installation." That means you can't upgrade an existing PC to Windows 7 RC. So if you're using an existing PC and want to keep the information on it, you'll need to back it up before you start.

1. Turn on your computer, insert the Windows 7 RC installation disc you created

in step 2 into the computer's DVD or CD drive, and then do one of the following:

2. If you want to replace your computer's existing operating system with the Windows 7 RC, and you don't need to adjust your disk partitions, go to step 2.
3. If your computer doesn't have an operating system installed, or you want to install the RC on another disk partition, restart your computer with the installation disc inserted in your CD or DVD drive. If you're asked to press a key to boot from DVD or CD, press any key. If the Install Windows page appears, go to step 2.
4. If the Install Windows page doesn't appear and you're not asked to press a key to start from DVD or CD, you might have to specify that your computer uses its DVD or CD drive as the start-up device. See Start Windows from a CD or DVD. After you select your DVD or CD drive as the start-up device, restart your computer, and then start Windows from the installation DVD or CD as previously described.
5. On the Install Windows page, follow the instructions, and then click Install now.
6. On the Get important updates for installation page, we recommend getting the latest updates to help ensure a successful installation and protect your computer against security threats. You need an Internet connection to get updates.
7. On the Please read the license terms page, if you accept the license terms, click I accept the license terms. (You must accept to continue the installation).
8. On the Which type of installation do you want? page, click Custom.
9. On the Where do you want to install Windows? page, do one of the following:

If you don't want to specify a specific partition to install Windows on, or create partitions on your hard disk, click Next to begin the installation.

If you already have another existing partition with enough free space and want to install the Windows 7 RC on that partition to create a multiboot configuration, select the partition you want to use, and then click Next to begin the installation. (Be sure to install the RC on a different partition from where your current version of Windows is installed).

If you want to create, extend, delete, or format a partition, click Drive options (advanced), click the option you want, and then follow the instructions. Click Next to begin the installation. (If the Drive options (advanced) option is disabled, you need to start your computer using the installation disc).

And follow the instructions.

#### Link to Download & FAQ's

Full details of How to Install and How to Remove Windows 7 RC1 can be found on Microsoft's Windows 7 site here:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/installation-instructions.aspx>



# H.M. Armed Forces Toys

New Toys. Your editor was at R.A.F. Northolt on the 6th May for the launch of a new range of military inspired action figures and toys.

Not really to do with computers, but interesting nevertheless as it will give you ideas for your children's or grandchildren's birthday presents.



Night Vision Goggles



Military Style Walkie Talkies

Character Options have launched a range of military inspired action figures and toys. The action figures include three figures from each of the services - Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. Plus the range will feature vehicles used by the services and realistic kit replica toys. In total there are 32 toys in the range.

The R.A.F. toys include a Fast Jet Pilot figure in full flight gear including white

leather flying gloves, 'bone dome' flying helmet with oxygen mask and survival-issue service pistol for use behind enemy lines.

There is also a model Harrier and R.A.F. Falcons display team Parachutist.

This range of toys have the full backing of the MOD

All the action figures have closely detailed weaponry and clothing and are accurately modelled on actual troops in the field right now. The Army Infantryman action figure comes with an SA80A2 assault rifle, Personal Role Radio, Kevlar flak jacket body armour, Mark 4 Alpha Kevlar ballistic protection helmet with standard-issue goggles and desert camouflage combats. The Royal Marine Commando figure is naturally kitted out with the acclaimed Green Beret. The Royal Air Force Fast Jet Pilot figure is in full flight gear including white leather flying gloves, 'bone dome' flying helmet with oxygen mask and survival-issue service pistol for use behind enemy lines.

Accompanying the 10 inch figures are a range of authentic scaled troop carrying vehicles including a replica tank with spring-powered gun and space for two figures, armoured vehicles, RAF VTOL (Vertical Take Off & Landing) Fast Jet and a Royal Navy R/C assault hovercraft which travels over land and water.

Other toys include essential forces kit items such as the exact replica two-way radios, a mini spy kit with tracking device and night vision goggles. HM Armed Forces Night Vision Goggles feature an authentic infrared image intensifier. The range also includes games as well as dress-up and role-

play toys.

## Pricing and Availability

From the usual retailers or online from Amazon.co.uk and other suppliers. Check online for pricing.



Harrier Jump Jet



Sgt Jimmy O'Brien, of the R.A.F. Falcons Parachute Display Team and Flt. Lt. Louise Buxton, Team Leader of the R.A.F. Falcons Parachute Display Team. Above the fully articulated toy model based on the R.A.F. Falcons that comes with a parachute for throwing in the air.