

## Meeting 09/10/2013

### Agony Corner:

After a quick review of last month's problems, we moved on...

1) 'I can't get Skype audio to work...'

- We last looked at this question in May and June of last year - 'How can I permanently change the default microphone settings in Skype?'
- Eventually solved by finding 'More options' and checking the default settings.
- There have been several evolutions of Skype since then and if you are still having problems there is now a Microsoft online 'Fix it' program that could be useful. The Fix it tool will check things like your audio device drivers, audio device connections, volume settings, muted devices, your default devices and even web cam issues. Just go to <http://support.microsoft.com/mats/skype/>

2) Still on Skype, 'Skype tells me that my router 'can't take it' and I get jerky pictures'

- This probably means that your broadband speed is not sufficient to cope with the demand and you get continual buffering (ie your PC is always trying to catch up).
- This led onto a general discussion on broadband speeds and around the table we found great variation on BB speeds. One fortunate member reported 17.4Mb/sec after a recent upgrade to BT fibre optics whereas the norm seemed to be 5-7Mb/sec but with some much lower.
- You can check your speed easily on line, a popular one is [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net) (NB wait for the 'Begin Test' icon and ignore any other inducements on the page).

3) 'When I print pdfs I only get half of what I want...why?'

- It's important to print pdfs from the pdf 'Print' icon on the bar rather than 'File, print' from top LH corner which can give erratic results depending on how and where from the pdf was opened.
- Even on the correct print dialogue box there are many options and if a previous setting is there it may not be appropriate for the new document.
- It's good practice to download the pdf to the hard drive and open it from there. It's then also safe if you delete the email.
- See topic for today, below, for more information.

4) 'How can I edit pdfs created from scanned documents?'

- If you want to edit a document after scanning it's best to use OCR (Optical Recognition Software) and then save it as a Word File rather than making a pdf.
- Most scanners come with some basic OCR software but if you are doing a lot you might want to invest in a commercial software package - Omnipage and Abby Fine Reader for example are both very good.
- If you have pdf files you wish to edit, they always have to be converted to a Word or text file. There are many free converters to download but a very simple and useful resource is <http://www.free-ocr.com/>. There's nothing to pay and no registration, just locate the pdf on your computer and upload it. You will then receive the editable text in a box on screen which can be copied then pasted into Notepad or Word.

5) 'I use passwords to open Windows on my (several) PCs. Recently, having done an AVG scan another (Microsoft) clean-up window opened. I clicked OK and let it run but when, at the end it asked for my password then wouldn't accept it and I couldn't access anything. It cost me £36 to have it fixed!'

- This is a recent problem that has apparently affected a lot of people and may be due to a faulty Windows update.

- There could be more than one password required on a Windows machine, your personal one, perhaps an 'administrator's pass word', and you may even have signed up to a Microsoft account to download their apps. Using the wrong one at the wrong time may have contributed to this problem
- If you are the only user of your machine, it is often more useful when installing Windows to take the 'no password required' option.

6) 'BT have changed their email access software, I can access it OK on my lap top (Win 7) and tablet (Android) however, I cannot access my BT email on my Windows 8 machine unless I enter my email and password. I can't get it to remember them.'

- Asking around the room, other BT internet customers hadn't experienced this problem which obviously needs further investigation on the machine in question.

7) 'I would like to use the Suffolk Library system, as discussed at the last two meetings, to borrow audio books. I managed to download a book but then I lost the software and can't access my download.'

- The system uses the 'Overdrive' software. You may have misplaced the short cut link.
- On Windows, go to Start, all programmes the look for 'Overdrive'. Right click on this and from the context (dropdown) menu left click on 'Create shortcut'.
- This will say 'Overdrive 2'. Left click on this and drag it onto the desktop.
- You will now have an easy launch into the Overdrive software and the audio book(s) will be on your 'Bookshelf'.

8) 'I have a Nexus tablet - how do I delete programmes or items I don't want anymore?'

- Nexus is an Android device. Go to the screen with all the apps on it and find 'File manager'. Tap this to open.
- In file manager, search for the file you are looking for. Highlight this. A new set of icons opens at the top RAH side of the screen.
- There's one that looks like a dustbin. Tap this. It will ask if you're sure. Tap yes and your file is deleted.

9) 'Has anyone any information on the Kindle Fire?'

- One member has one and can highly recommend, but do you really need one when you have a normal Kindle Reader plus an iPad?
- The Kindle Fire can store and play audio books but some of the basic Kindle readers can also do this.
- Kindle reader or Kindle Fire. You can synchronise your Kindle books with other supported devices you own. Amazon's Whispersync technology keeps track of your last reading location in each book. For example, you can read a few pages using the Kindle application on your iPhone, iPad (Kindle for iPad app), or Android device and then pick up where you left off when you return to your Kindle. To learn more about supported devices, go to [www.kindle.com/support](http://www.kindle.com/support).

**Our topic for the day:**

**PDFs - What they are and how you can use them:** (this topic last covered in April 2011)

This was our topic for the day; I gave a PowerPoint demonstration of all things 'PDF'. In summary.....

- Portable Document Format documents, PDFs were developed by Adobe in the early '90s as a universal means of transferring documents between different computers, readable by all, irrespective of the original software used to create them. These were, and in big business still are, created in the programme Adobe Acrobat.

- Due to the popularity of PDFs, Adobe then created a free 'Reader' available to all. As suggested in the name, this makes PDFs readable (but not to any great extent anyway, editable) by anyone.
- If you've ever sent a carefully constructed Word document to a friend only to find that on their PC all the original fonts have come out wrong and the layout looks like a horrific mess, then you'll understand why PDFs are so useful.

Manufacturers can distribute cheap, digital versions of printed instruction manuals, safe in the knowledge that anyone with a PDF reader program will be able to view the document exactly as it was initially intended.

PDFs can also be useful for brochures, forms, legal documents, ebooks, digital magazines and more. At home, PDFs are great for newsletters, party invites and just about any other type of document that you want to share with others, either online or attached to an email.

- How to read a PDF. First of all, you need a PDF 'reader'. Some PCs and Laptops come ready installed with PDF reader software. If not, it is easy to download the free Adobe Reader software. We saw how to download and install from here.... <http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/?promoid=DAFYK>
- Next we had a couple of examples of how PDFs are used by companies to provide information that can be downloaded from the web. A contents Index from Computer Active (unfortunately no longer available) and my own electricity bill.
- Whilst the Adobe Reader is the defacto standard, it can be rather hungry in using system resources and sometimes rather slow. There are some leaner alternatives, a very good free one is the Visagesoft, eXpert PDF Reader, <http://www.visagesoft.com/products/pdfreader/>.
- In the 'Portable Apps' range is 'Sumatra pdf portable. This can be installed on, say, a USB which makes you independent of any PC based programme. Get it here. [http://portableapps.com/apps/office/sumatra\\_pdf\\_portable](http://portableapps.com/apps/office/sumatra_pdf_portable).
- It is most useful to make your own PDFs. Adobe Acrobat is too expensive for the domestic user but there are alternatives. If you have MS Office 2010 or the free 'Open Office', these both have built-in converters. For Office 2007 there is a free download. This download allows you to export and save to the PDF format in eight 2007 Microsoft Office programs. It also allows you to send the PDFs as e-mail attachments. Here is the link.... <http://tinyurl.com/259wdd4>.
- For earlier versions of Office or any other program with a print option, there is 'PDF Converter', <http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/files/> which installs as a 'printer' option in the printer dialogue box. (Make sure when you are installing this programme that you uncheck the 'browser add-on' option)
- Finally, we saw how PDFs can be easily made from printed documents using the standard software that comes with every scanner.

Please note: Throughout this session we had great difficulty in accessing any web pages, almost everyone being blocked. I've spoken to Wendy and she has reset the security settings for us so we should be able to again access the web freely.

### **Next Meeting:**

Will be on **Wednesday 13th November**, 1.30pm at Stowupland School.

**Topic for the day:** As you know, we were let down on our scheduled talk on eBay at our October meeting but as this was potentially a popular subject I will be giving a presentation (helped by Zena) entitled '**Ebay, A New User's Guide**' at the November meeting. We will go through all the stages of selling an item using an actual posting. Did it sell? You'll have to come to the meeting to find out!