

Meeting 25 September 2020

Last meeting: We had a quick look through the notes of the [meeting of 26th June](#), but there were no matters arising

New items:

With the small numbers present, there were few new issues. We also noted that there had been zero activity on the forum page since May this year.

1) Video editing: If you are into this subject, you may have had the need to edit out elements of the video either to get rid of unwanted sections or to shorten the overall length. In theory, very simple using many of the standard video editing programmes but in practice you will almost certainly finish up with a file that is bigger, often by 2 or 3 times, than you started with.

Why is this? Technically complicated, but essentially each time a video is edited it goes through a process of decoding/encoding which inevitably increases the size.

Following an article in Computer Active, I was led to a tool (not a programme) called [Lossless Cut](#) which does the job and gets rid of many Mb of data without loss of quality. It's not all that intuitive but with a little experimentation it gives excellent results. Don't go to the Microsoft store, they charge about £16.00 for it!

Ann also uses this programme and confirmed its usefulness.

2) Home network: I reported that my lap top and desktop PC had stopped 'seeing' each other. Each could see other devices on the network – TVs, Fire stick, phones etc., but not each other. I followed all the necessary procedures, sharing, Network discovery settings etc., but everything was set as required. We discussed this and surmised that it may have 'broken' during a Windows update on one or the other machine – stranger things have happened!

Since the meeting, things are now back to normal where the machines can interact without problem, but I haven't knowingly altered any settings. What I have done (for another reason) is to reboot my router – could it be that which has solved the problem?

I've also read that in this situation it's worth checking that in 'Services' (run: services.msi) both 'Function Discovery Provider Host' and 'Function Discovery Resource Publication' are both set to 'Automatic' (which mine are).

3) I've been remiss in that I haven't passed on a couple of hints sent to me by Dave P following the March (!) meeting....

- At the meeting he mentioned to the group that he would pass on the details for a couple of programs. The first one sits as a browser extension and minimises the exposure to unnecessary tracking and advertising cookies, this is called Minimal consent. [Minimal Consent - A Browser Extension](#) that makes cookie banners a thing of the past.
- The second one was a program he'd used for many years called [Revo Uninstaller Pro](#) and this is a really thorough program when it comes to removing all the odd little files and rubbish that can be left behind when you just run the uninstaller of a program you are deleting.

Since the meeting.....

4) Cleaning a hard drive: I have an old lap top, Dell Inspiron 1520, originally on XP then upgraded to Windows 7. In spite of all my best efforts it would not upgrade to Windows 10. Before disposal I needed to wipe the system completely. I achieved this using [DBAN – Darik’s Boot and Nuke](#) (it won’t work on SSDs apparently). I created a boot CD, changed the BIOS settings to boot first from the CD drive and went from there. Watching from then, it made a series of passes which took about 5 hours in total. I now have a laptop completely devoid of software and data.

5) Malware Bytes Browser Guard: I’ve disabled Adblock and giving this [new extension](#) a trial. From the ‘Overview’, *“Malwarebytes Browser Guard gives you a safer and faster web browsing experience. It blocks malicious websites while filtering out annoying ads and other unwanted content. In fact, you can browse up to four times faster.....”* and more. So far it seems to be doing the job.

Discussion: At our last Scout Hut meeting in March, I was quite enthused as we had 11 of our 18 members present following a decline in attendance throughout 2019. Unfortunately, our virtual meetings have been less successful with 7/18 in June and now 5/18 in September. We discussed this situation at length and more or less came to the conclusion that the group had run its course and that it was time to call it a day.

These days it’s much easier to get information and answers to questions than it was, say, 20 years ago. We’ve said many times that there are perhaps just 3 sources any one needs..a subscription to [Computer Active](#), access to [GCF Learn free](#) and Mr Google himself for any other queries so why do we need a Computing and Technology Group?

We probably don’t, but what we do appreciate is the social interaction that meeting together, even virtually, gives us. We can safely say that the 5 of us thoroughly enjoyed just chatting about how we were and what we’ve been up to since our last meeting, so we decided that after all we would have another catch up in December (normally our ‘Bring a Plate’ session) and of course everyone is welcome to join in if they wish.

Probably, **Friday 18th December** would be appropriate? Either way, I’ll send out a reminder closer to the time....

Keep safe.....

Regards

Peter