



SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE

Power Options in Windows 8.1 *by Alan German*

I couldn't resist any longer. It wasn't the allure (if there is any) of Windows 8. Rather, it was the idea of a lightweight, ten-inch tablet, with a dockable keyboard, that would provide a highly portable, yet reasonably powerful, computing solution. So, after researching the current hardware offerings, I decided that the best bang for the buck was an Asus Transformer Book T100.

And, that was where the fun started. I have never owned a computer where I had to use Google to find out how to turn it off! But, that's Windows 8. Who knew to swipe across the screen – from the right towards the centre – to bring up the Charms bar, select Settings, and then Power, and finally Shut Down? There had to be a better way. So, back to Google, for a little more research.

It turns out that there is a great solution posted on Paul Thurrott's Supersite for Windows (<http://winsupersite.com/windows-8/windows-81-update-1-tip-toggle-power-button>). This provides a simple registry patch that displays the power-option button (the blue circle with the vertical bar) on the Start Screen.

Unfortunately, this patch had no effect on my tablet. Paul notes that: "You won't see it on every system. Microsoft tells me it's tied to an internal setting called the Power Platform Role that PC and device makers must set accurately in order to obtain the Windows logo. If this setting is configured as "Slate," the button will not appear, because it would be too easy to tap accidentally and tablet users are comfortable with the edge-based Uis."

Clearly, my T100 is tagged as a Slate and, as Redmond knows (in its usual infinite wisdom), I would be devastated if I were able to control my machine's power options at the press of a button, and even more so if the machine actually shut down when I touched a shut down button!

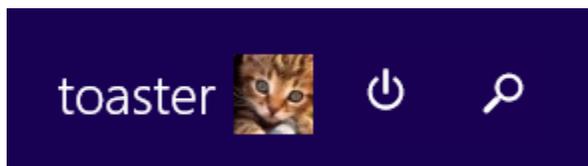
It turns out that there are several keyboard shortcuts, and even a right-click menu feature, that would allow me to control the power; however, these seem to defeat the purpose of "touch", and wouldn't be very practical when using the hybrid machine in pure tablet mode. So, a different solution was required.

Eventually, I tracked down shutdown.exe, the program that actually runs the power-off process (<http://www.softwareok.com/?seite=faq-Windows-8&faq=24>). This system software has switches for both shutdown (/s) and restart (/r) so it's a simple matter to create a desktop shortcut that will call the program to shutdown (or restart) the computer.

Essentially, one right-clicks on the desktop, selects New – Shortcut, and enters %windir%\System32\shutdown.exe /s /t 0 as the command to be used (/t 0 means no timeout before implementing the command).

Now, it was just a matter of changing the shortcut's icon to something a little more meaningful than a thumbnail of the command window. I opted to use

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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, May 13th, 2015**

May Raffle

For the May raffle, courtesy of VMWare Canada, we have a copy of **VMWare Workstation**.

Those who attended the April OPCUG meeting got to see just how powerful virtualization can be.

VMware Workstation is a hypervisor that runs on most 64-bit Windows or Linux operating systems. You can set up one or more virtual machines, and use them simultaneously along with the host operating system. Each virtual machine runs its own operating system, which can be any of over 200 different operating systems including Windows, Linux, BSD, and MS-DOS.

VMWare Workstation is valued at \$250

Tickets are, as always, a good deal at \$1 for one, a great deal at \$2 for three or the unbelievable bargain of \$5 for ten!

Coming Up...

► Wednesday May 13, 2015

Speaker: Jeff Dubois (OPCUG) and Fred Ennis

Topic: VoIP (Voice over IP)

Today's internet has transform the telecommunications industry. Reasonable quality internet connections have served to facilitate the effective use of VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) as an alternative to the traditional landline telephone. Jeff Dubois and Fred Ennis of the OPCUG examine a number of free and low-cost options to replace or augment your existing telephone service.

Wednesday June 10, 2015

5:30 pm: Annual Pizza Night & eWaste collection event

7:00 pm: Presentation on Cybersecurity issues

Speaker: Eric Jacksch

Topic: Cybersecurity for Individuals

Eric is a leading cybersecurity analyst with over 20 years of practical security experience. He has consulted to some of the world's largest banks, governments, automakers, insurance companies and postal organizations. Eric writes a weekly se-

curity column for IT in Canada, was a regular columnist for Monitor Magazine, and has contributed to several other publications.

Eric will survey the cybersecurity landscape with an emphasis on how it impacts individuals. Topics will include common attack vectors, advanced threats, and protecting yourself at home. Time will be reserved for questions and answers.

The OPCUG will have an eWaste collection event in partnership with Evolu-TIC Outaouais, and in association with Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES). Items that can be reused will be retained and refurbished, while all other older or not-useful electronic items will be taken to the processing plant and properly disposed of safely and responsibly with respect to OES guidelines. Everyone is invited to rid their homes of items no longer required. The eWaste event will be on June 10th, 2015, from 5:30pm to 7pm near the big tent at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 11 Aviation Parkway. For more information please check our web page at <http://opcug.ca/public/history/eWaste/2015/eWaste.html>.

April Prize Winners

At our monthly meeting on April 8, 2015, **Richard Aylesworth** was the winner of the Logitech K400 wireless keyboard via our nightly raffle.

Taking home a door prize copy of VMWare Workstation were **Jeff Dubois** and **David Clark**.

Thanks to VMWare for the prize donation.

2015 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, May 13 th	7:30 p.m. Auditorium of the Canada Aviation and Space Museum , 11 Aviation Parkway. http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php
Beginners' SIG	Wednesday, May 13 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Linux SIG	Wednesday, May 13 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, May 13 th	10:00 p.m. (after all other SIGs) at Liam Maguire's, St. Laurent Blvd. at Innes Rd.

Please note that unless otherwise noted, SIGs meet at 9:00 p.m. (immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting).

Drama over DRAM: Get your \$20 Rebate from a Class Action Lawsuit

by Mike Pereira

By now many of you have seen the commercials on TV and online about how you can claim \$20 or more from a Canadian class action lawsuit. The ads are true. If you purchased certain electronic products between April 1, 1999 and June 30, 2002, you are entitled to a portion of the settlement.

To get your rebate visit the website, <https://www.themoneyismine.ca>, set up to administer the claims.

The deadline to submit your claim is June 23, 2015. After filling in the form the law firms administering the settlement will mail cheques out by the fall of 2015.

What is this about?

A lawsuit was brought against a number of computer manufacturers who made dynamic random access memory (DRAM). The plaintiffs, acting on behalf of all Canadian consumers, accused the companies of price-fixing and as a result people overpaid for products that had computer memory. Some of the companies pleaded guilty to criminal price-fixing in the United States and Europe, and this resulted in a settlement in Canada worth over \$80 million dollars.

The claim website has two different methods you can choose to get your refund. The quickest method is the simplified form where you enter some contact information and get twenty dollars without any proof of purchase. Considering 16 years has passed since the start of the claim period most people won't have receipts. The second method is to fill out a standard claim. This is for those asking for more than the twenty dollars. You require proof of purchase to get more money.

Can I get more than 20?

Provided you have receipts, if you bought more than two or three computers (laptops or desktops) and a few other devices during that period, you can get up to \$5 for each additional computer and about \$3.50 for each additional stick of ram bought separately. Other devices with RAM such as printers and MP3 players can increase the tally by dimes and nickels. For example if you bought 10 computers during that period and you have receipts, you will get \$50 back.

The claim website provides a handy calculator for you to check if you are entitled to more than the basic claim:

<https://www.themoneyismine.ca/end-consumer-calculator>

Most home users, even with lots of receipts, won't get more than \$20-\$30. But, for example, if you had a business where you purchased lots of eligible electronics, and kept your records, you could get a few hundred back or more.

There is some fine print limiting your claim. You must be at least 18 years old. You can only claim one refund per household. You can't have already claimed from a parallel lawsuit happening in the United States and you verify the information about your purchases is truthful. In agreeing to the claim you waive some of your rights to sue the RAM makers on your own for the same issue.

I filled out my simplified claim form, so it's a wait and see for me.

On-line Membership Payment



When you receive a membership renewal notice, you will find that there is now an option to renew your membership on-line using PayPal. You can pay your membership dues electronically. Use the link provided to go to our payment page on PayPal's secure web server. You can use a PayPal account or, if you don't have an account, you can make a one-time payment with any major credit card. Simply click on the "Don't

have a PayPal account?" link, provide your credit card number, contact information, and press "Pay". PayPal will send you an E-mail with confirmation of the payment details. This will be followed up by an E-mail from OPCUG's Treasurer acknowledging receipt of your membership payment. You can, of course, still pay using a cheque or cash.

See <http://www.opcug.ca/public/reg.htm> for full details of membership payment options.

Member Survey

The board is interested in finding out what you, the membership, would like from the OPCUG. A survey has been posted to The PUB at <http://opcug.ca/ques?survey> and all members are encouraged to fill it out and have your voices heard.

You need to have an account on The PUB in order to access the survey. If you don't have an account on The PUB, you can create one. See <http://opcug.ca/public/pubacc.htm>

SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE

Apps for Smartphones and Tablets

by Alan German, Chris Taylor and Jeff Dubois

Several OPCUG members have been seen consulting smartphones, or hauling around tablets, at recent monthly meetings and a suggestion has been made to the Board of Directors (BOD) that we provide information specific to such devices as part of future meetings and newsletters. What do you think of this idea? Contact any member of the BOD and let us know your thoughts.

In the meantime, many smartphones and tablets are running under either Windows or Android (which is close cousin of Linux), and so fit the general profile of PC's, albeit somewhat unconventionally.

So, for those members who have one (or more!) of these devices, the articles in this special issue of *Ottawa PC News* are focused on software and solutions appropriate to smartphones and/or tablets.

In particular, the following are a few Android apps that the authors find either necessary or at least extremely useful.

avast! Mobile Security

Secure your phone and/or tablet with this top-rated free mobile security app with both anti-virus and anti-theft protection. Scan for viruses, Trojans, and spyware, and stop unwanted phishing.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/cbw5lh4>

Word Lens Translator

A fantastic resource for the traveller to foreign lands. Just aim your Android smartphone or tablet's camera at a sign in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, or Russian and have it translate the text into English. Amazingly, it shows the translation with the original layout and fonts. No Internet connection is required.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/d77yrvb>



Google Sky Map

A free app from Google for the budding astronomer. Just aim your Android device at the sky to find out which constellations, stars, planets, etc. you are looking at. Type Pollux in the search box and Sky Map will tell you which way to point to see that star. Pinch to zoom in or out. You can even use Time Travel to see what the sky looks like at any point in time.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/bnvqnf0>

K9 Mail

This open-source E-mail client supports IMAP, POP3 and Exchange 2003/2007. Use multiple folders and easily search your messages right on your smartphone.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/87u7o19>



picoPark

Ever park your car, go off doing something, and forget where you parked? If so, picoPark is the app for you! Just hit the button when you get out of the car and record GPS information on your location. Bring up the app later and it can tell you the distance to your car, and give you a compass bearing. Just point your Android device at the car symbol on the screen and start walking!

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/npun2dz>

KeePassDroid

If you have long ago surpassed the number of passwords you can remember, take control with KeePassDroid. Keep all your passwords safely locked away under a strong master password. The database is compatible with the Windows version of KeePass, so you can sync your Android device with your computer.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/cefwanc>

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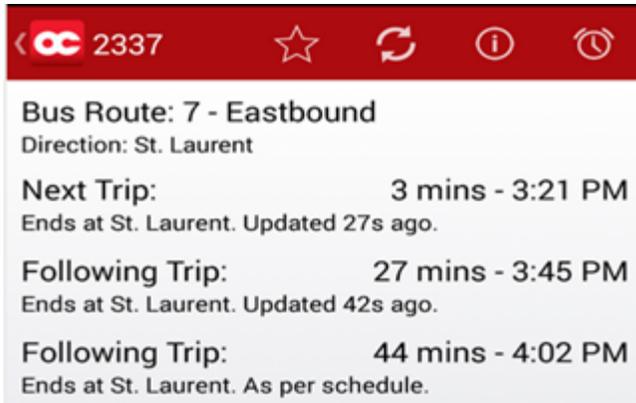
SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE

Apps... *Continued from page 4*

OC Transpo Tracker

Never miss your bus again! This app uses the new real-time GPS data released by OC Transpo to allow you to track buses throughout the City of Ottawa. Well worth the \$0.99 cost if you're a regular transit rider.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/oq4smjb>



Android Device Manager

Not strictly speaking an app, as there is nothing to install, but this is great if you have misplaced your device. Go to Google Play (<http://play.google.com>) and click the gear icon in the top right of the screen. Choose "Android Device Manager". Once you have logged onto your Google account, you can show the location of your phone or tablet, lock it, or wipe it. If you have lost your phone around the house, you can click a button to have the phone ring at full volume for 5 minutes. That should give you time enough to hunt it down under the cushion it slipped under!

Software Data Cable

Is it too much trouble to connect your Android device to your computer with an actual cable? Use this app to connect wirelessly! Transfer files two ways using FTP.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/ovxczgy>

ConvertPad

Need to convert from inches to mm? That's pretty easy. Just whip out the calculator on your Android device and multiply by 2.54. But what if you need to know how many carats are in a pound, or, what a woman's size 2 in the U.S. is in the U.K.? When a Scott offers you a wee dram of whisky, did you know he is offering you less than 4 ml.? This app comes stuffed with 98 categories, each of which may have dozens of specific units. So, the next time someone asks you how many parsecs are in an astronomical unit, with ConvertPad, you'll be ready.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/p8fg7gy>

GSam Battery Monitor

Does your battery run down in way too short a time? Perhaps your smartphone is hot to the touch? You have a rogue app which is eating up your battery power. You need a battery monitor and GSam is the best there is! Hunt down those battery draining apps with the App Sucker, view details of the battery status, chart its performance over time, and more.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/bmflkaq>



Fongo

This excellent softphone app turns your Android tablet or eReader into a phone. You will be assigned a free local telephone number and be able to make (or receive) unlimited Canada-wide calls using VoIP technology and any Wi-Fi connection. Travelling outside Canada? Call home for free. Includes voicemail, caller ID, call waiting and call forwarding.

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/mpmolcu>

BigDialer

If you've got big fingers or reduced vision then most of the built-in dial pads on smartphones are inaccessible. BigDialer is a highly-customizable dialing pad with, as the name implies, BIG numbers – for just \$1.99

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/cpruy7>



SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE

Microsoft Surface *by Chris Taylor*

I have never been a huge fan of tablet computers. Although they are very portable, I always found them to be best as a consuming device rather than for producing information. If all you want to do is things like web browsing, watching movies, reading email, and a *tiny* amount of typing, they can be really great. But as soon as you need to do any significant amount of typing, or precision pointing and clicking, a tablet can be very frustrating. Quite frankly, typing on an on-screen keyboard sucks. Ditto for pointing with fat fingers at tiny on-screen targets.

I think there is a good reason why Bluetooth keyboards and mice are the most popular add-ons to tablets. The trouble is, once you add a keyboard and mouse to your tablet ... don't you end up with, essentially, a laptop computer?

Microsoft seems to feel the same way I do. When they built the Surface tablet, they came up with a design that is a nice blend of tablet and laptop. When you truly want it to be a tablet, you can do so. But when you need to do a bunch of typing or precision pointer work, you can snap on a magnetically connecting keyboard with trackpad.



Before going further, let me say that the price of Microsoft Surface tablets is not for the faint of heart. If you are looking for inexpensive, stop reading now and look elsewhere. But there is a lot to like if you are willing to pay the big bucks.

Microsoft originally came out with Surface in October, 2012. It did not interest me at all as it could only run Windows Store apps, not the full Win32 applications we all know and love, like Photoshop, CorelDraw, and WordPerfect. The Surface Pro came out in February, 2013. In addition to Windows Store apps, it could run Win32 apps. But, I never looked at it seriously.

The Surface 2 and Surface Pro 2 were released at the same time in October 2013. The Surface 2 was still only able to run Windows Store apps and did not interest me. The Surface Pro 2 runs Win32 apps and, thanks to a very generous brother, I ended up with one in early 2014. Its processor is a decent Intel Haswell Core i5, it has 4 GB RAM, 64 GB storage (there is a 128GB model as well. I opted instead for an additional 64 GB micro-SD card), a full HD, 1920x1080, 16x9 screen, a full size USB 3 port, a mini-DisplayPort, Bluetooth 4 and 802.11a/b/g/n Wi-Fi.

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SPECIAL 'TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES' ISSUE

Microsoft Surface *(Continued from page 6)*

With the add-on “Type Cover” keyboard/trackpad, I find it makes for a decent Windows laptop computer. I use it all the time for

the library presentations I give and it is my go-to portable Windows computer. I actually rarely use it as a pure tablet, with keyboard removed.

If I had waited until last summer, I would have ended up with the Surface 3, which is the device where I think Microsoft really hit its stride.

The Surface Pro 3 has three processor options; Intel Core i3, Core i5, and Core i7. You can get 4 or 8 GB RAM. Storage options range from 64 to 512 GB. Both front and rear cameras are now 5 mp (up from 1.2 mp). For Wi-Fi, they added “ac” to the previous 802.11a/b/g/n. Most other specs are pretty much the same as the Surface Pro 2 – except for the kickstand and the screen, both of which most reviews rave about.

Microsoft moved from a 2-position kickstand on the Surface Pro 2 to one you can adjust to any angle. Most people seem to find this much better as you can adjust the tilt of the screen to exactly match your needs at any particular time.

But the screen is the really big change. Microsoft moved from the 16x9 aspect ratio with 1920x1080 resolution on the Surface Pro 2 to a 3:2 aspect ratio with a resolution of 2160x1440. While the 16x9 aspect ratio on the Surface Pro 2 made it really only usable in landscape mode, reviewers are finding the 3x2 aspect ratio on the Surface Pro 3 to be very usable in either portrait or landscape mode. And the increased resolution is welcomed.

The Surface Pro 2 can still be found and there are some deals to be had. At the time of writing this, Staples has one with 8 GB RAM and 256 GB storage for \$900. Be sure to also buy the \$100 Type Cover 2.

For the Surface Pro 3, there are lots of price points depending on processor, RAM, and storage. At the lowest level, you are looking at about \$850 for a Core-i3 with 4 GB RAM and 64 GB storage. For the top of the line with Core-i7, 8 GB RAM, and 512 GB storage, you are looking at a breathtaking \$1,800.

Oh and no matter which model of Surface Pro 3 you choose, you are facing an additional \$130 for the Type Cover 3.



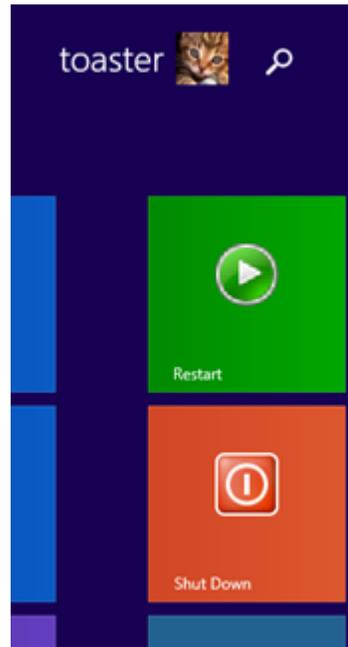
Power Options in Windows 8.1 *(Continued from page 1)*

shutdown and restart icons from <http://www.iconarchive.com/show/windows-8-metro-icons-by-dakirby309/Other-Power-Shut-Down-Metro-icon.html> since this developer offered icons in a consistent design format.



Desktop icons

Now I had desktop icons that could simply be clicked to either shutdown or restart the computer. However, the nicest part of this process was that I could also pin these two shortcuts to the Start Menu. There they showed up as two tiles that could be arranged so as to be readily accessible on my customized start screen.



Start menu tiles

So, now I have the best of both worlds – desktop icons that can be clicked, or tiles that can be touched – to shut down or restart my Windows 8.1 hybrid tablet. But, I guess I have to be careful not to touch that Shut Down button accidentally!



OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the 7:30 p.m. **Auditorium of the Canada Aviation and Space Museum**, 11 Aviation Parkway, Ottawa. Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) go until 10 p.m.

Parking is available at the museum for a flat fee of \$3 after 5pm. Limited street parking is available for free. Details at <http://opcug.ca/public/regmtg.htm>

OPCUG Membership Fees: \$25 per year
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