



OTTAWA

# PC NEWS

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## PRODUCT REVIEW

### Wondershare LiveBoot 2012 *by Chris Taylor*

It often pays to watch the messages that get posted on The PUB.

On August 6th, Dunc Petrie posted a message in the General Messages area that started; *Wondershare LiveBoot 2012 is offering a lifetime license absolutely FREE until August 12: Usually \$59.95*

*What is LiveBoot 2012?* Well, the web site claims it can; “Rapidly Rescue You from Any Imaginable PC Crash Disaster with a boot CD”. While I might dispute the use of the word “any”, it is a pretty powerful recovery package.

You start by downloading an executable that is only 6MB. Sweet! Oh, but that is just the downloader which then downloads a 321MB file. Don’t try this on dial-up! It is understandable that it is so large. Once you run the installation file, you end up with a nice little menu program that allows you to burn a CD or create a bootable USB drive with the actual program. If you are using a USB flash drive, you will need one that is at least 330 MB. And since it will be wiped clean prior to the addition of *LiveBoot*, be sure to save any important files on the flash drive.

*LiveBoot* is based on the Windows WinPE 3.0 environment. This provides a stripped down Windows 7 system that can be run from removable media.

While WinPE (the “PE” stands for “pre-installation environment”) was originally designed by Microsoft for deploying Windows in a corporate environment, it is also used by various software authors as a platform for recovery tools.

Once you create the CD or USB flash drive, you simply boot from it. After a minute or so, up pops the *LiveBoot* environment and you can access all the tools to help fix broken Windows.

*LiveBoot* will automatically connect to the network if it sees a wired connection, so you can have access to other computers on your network and the Internet. Wireless connections are not available however.

The main screen divides the tools into four broad categories; Windows Recovery, Data Recovery, Disk Management, and Password & Key Finder.

#### Windows Recovery

This section provides some solution centers with specific tools to meet a particular problem, such as Windows crashing on every boot or random crashes after Windows loads. The complete set of tools includes Master Boot Record Recovery, Boot Sector Recovery, Boot File Recovery, Registry Recovery, Registry Editor, access to Win-

dows System Restore (where you can try to recover by using a standard Windows restore point), Memory Diagnostics and Windows Backup/Restore.

#### Data Recovery

The Data Recovery section is designed to allow you to restore lost files. There is a Smart Recovery option that automates the process. Or you can opt to go for a more directed approach of looking for deleted files, lost files (from deleted or corrupted partitions), or lost partitions. A number of options allow you to narrow your search. For example, you can look for specific filenames. Or you can search for files created or modified in a specific time period. File recovery can take many hours, depending on the size of your disk and number of files you have. As well, recovery is highly dependent on how heavily the disk has been used since the files were “lost”. But it certainly seems to do a thorough job of finding anything that is recoverable.

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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

# October Raffle

Courtesy of the Microsoft MVP program, we have a copy of **Windows 7 Ultimate** for the October raffle. This is the full version (not the "upgrade only" version) that can be installed on any PC. Valued at \$350.

If you have not yet moved to Windows 7, buy some tickets and see why so many Windows users think this is the best operating system to ever come out of Redmond.

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, October 12, 2011

**Topic:** Members' Favourites Night

**Speaker:** Various OPCUG members

**T**his month our meeting is going to be a Members' Favourites Night. If you have something you would like to show and have not yet said so please let Andrea know ([andrea.wells@opcug.ca](mailto:andrea.wells@opcug.ca)).

Otherwise, just come out and enjoy the presentations. We already have a good line up of items.

## September Prize Winners

**O**ur two raffle prize winners at the General Meeting of Sept. 14, 2011 were **Gail Eagen** and **Bob Herres** who each won a copy of the Diskeeper 2011 Pro Premier software.

Many thanks to Diskeeper for donating the raffle prizes.

## 2011 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, October 12 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 p.m. Auditorium of the <b>Canada Museum of Science and Technology</b> , 1867 St. Laurent Blvd. <a href="http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/english/index.cfm">http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/english/index.cfm</a>
Beginners' SIG	Wednesday, October 12 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Linux / Open Source SIG	Wednesday, October 12 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, October 12 <sup>th</sup>	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).

## 2012 OPCUG Elections

Once a year, the OPCUG holds elections for the 9-member Board of Directors. We are once again coming up to this annual event.

We encourage all members to consider running for a board position or getting involved in some other manner in the operations of the OPCUG.

If you want more information about what is involved, please talk to any current or past Board member. Names are listed in the Newsletter and on the web site (<http://opcug.ca>).

Nominations can be submitted to Bob Herres, Election Chair, in person at the October, November and December club meetings or by sending an email to [nominations@opcug.ca](mailto:nominations@opcug.ca).

Nominations must be received by midnight, December 31, 2011.

Please get involved. Please help the OPCUG continue in its role of *Users Helping Users!*

*Bob Herres  
Election Chair*



# PRODUCT REVIEW

## shoX mini speaker *by Chris Taylor*

I give a lot of presentations. This entails schlepping around a modest amount of equipment, including a netbook, an AC adapter, a network cable, a VGA cable and a remote I use to drive PowerPoint presentations. Recently, I bought a tiny pico projector in case the projector supplied at my destination is missing or dies. And the projector has an AC adapter, a VGA cable, and an HDMI cable.

Last year, a couple of new presentations included video clips. Given that my netbook speakers really couldn't pump out the volume I needed, I started carrying around some desktop speakers. That got old after one time and I went looking for some portable speakers. At Future Shop, I found an Insignia USB Sound Bar. At \$38, this 9" long speaker clipped to the top of the screen and put out a higher volume than the speakers built into my netbook. And life was good.

Well, perhaps "better" is more accurate. I could live with it, but I found even the portable speaker was a bit on the large size.

Last spring, I attended an IT Architect Forum hosted by Microsoft and at the registration table they had a couple of door prizes. One caught my eye – the shoX mini speaker from Genumark in Toronto. The box proudly proclaimed "mini size MAX sound!" I could attest to the "mini size" part – the shoX is about 2 inches in diameter and just shy of 1.5 inches high when closed. When opened (more on this later) it stands 2 inches tall. But "MAX sound"? Out of such a small package? I doubted it.

I didn't win the door prize, but I jotted down the web site listed on the box. Recently I came across my notes and visited the web site. I decided it looked interesting enough to give it a try.

When my shoX arrived, I plugged it in, expecting decent quality sound. I was plainly wrong in this regard. The sound quality was not "decent". It was "amazing". Not trusting my tin ears, I called my son into the room. Michael likes his music. He is in his 4th year of a music program at Ottawa University. He has 5.1 surround sound on his computer. He refuses to use the cheap earbuds that came with his iPod, instead opting for a pair that cost \$180. When he decided to buy an over-the-ears headset, he went for a Sennheiser that was over \$100 on sale. Suffice it to say, Michael knows his music. I first played some music over the speakers built into Shaula, my latest netbook – an Asus Lamborghini, which has a Bang & Olufsen ICEpower® sound system that Asus claims provides "crystal clear, dynamic and powerful sound that's bound to sweep listeners off their feet and take them on a journey of adventure, whatever their fancy."

It sounded pretty good. I then plugged in the shoX. A burst of loud, rich music flooded the room. The improvement was huge!

Michael grabbed the shoX, headed to the computer room and went sifting through his music library. When I asked what he was doing. I got hushed up. He was obviously deep in concentration. Finding what he wanted, he played a passage through his Logitech 5.1 surround sound speakers. Cello music filled the room. Did I mention Michael likes his music loud? He then plugged in the shoX mini speaker.

I won't insult anyone's intelligence by saying the shoX mini speaker was better than the 5.1 surround sound. But it was amazingly close. Michael switched back and forth between the two and finally said, "That's incredible. I chose this music because when you have harmonies with multiple parts that are

similar and overlaid, poor quality speakers cause the multiple instruments to muddle together. But the shoX reproduces the sound so they can all be clearly distinguished."

Over the next few days, as I demoed the shoX to multiple people, everyone showed similar amazement at the quality of the sound that comes out of the shoX.

### A closer look at the shoX

The shoX mini speaker is a marvelous little round disk with a single speaker pointing directly up. In the closed position, it produces good sound. If you open it by twisting it slightly, it pops up an additional half-inch or so in height. This opens a chamber within the shoX and increases the bass quality with what Genumark calls their patented v-bass technology.

The shoX is a powered speaker with a built-in lithium battery that charges by plugging it into a computer's USB port in 3 to 4 hours. Once charged, it will operate for 3 to 5 hours depending on volume. My contact at Genumark mentioned that you can also charge the shoX using any wall-plug adapter that has a USB mini-B output (this includes many MP3 players and cell phones) and charge the shoX in as little as one hour.

The speaker outputs a quite loud 2.4 W. I tried it in the auditorium at the Museum where we meet and, at half volume, it was pretty easy to hear even at the back.

The shoX can be used on any device that accepts a standard 3.5mm audio jack. This includes most computers, laptops, netbooks, MP3 players, smart phones, etc.

*(Continued on page 5)*

**shoX mini speaker** *(Continued from page 4)*

The single port on the shoX is a standard USB mini-B. However, the supplied cable is definitely not standard. It has two cords that come out of the mini-B plug. One ends in a USB Standard A plug that will plug into a computer's USB port to charge the shoX. The other ends in a standard 3.5 mm audio jack. If lost or damaged, I know I could charge the shoX with an off-the-shelf USB cable. However, I have not seen a cable that has a 3.5 mm audio plug at one end and a mini USB at the other. I think my only chance of a replacement would be from Genumark. I would have preferred the audio connecting through a separate audio cable with standard 3.5 mm audio plugs at both ends.

Another concern I have with the shoX is the cost of shipping. The speaker is not available through any retail stores. You can only get it by ordering it off the Genumark web site or in person at their offices in Toronto. The cheapest shipping method is UPS Standard at \$13.66. This feels a little pricy on an item that only costs \$29.95.

Both my concerns are very minor. The main thing about the shoX mini speaker is the incredible sound that comes out of it. And I have absolutely no concerns over this. This is one amazing little device that has a permanent place in my bag of goodies I haul around with Shaula.

**Bottom line**

Product: shoX mini speaker

Price: \$29.95 (plus \$13.66 shipping)

web site: <http://www.shoxmini.com>





## LiveBoot 2012 *(Continued from page 1)*

### Disk Management

This area of *LiveBoot* is divided up into 4 areas.

*Clone Genius* allows you to clone either a single partition or an entire disk. This can be useful if you are replacing an old disk or upgrading to a larger disk.

*Partition Genius* allows you to do just about anything you can think of with disk partitions. You can create new ones, delete those you no longer need, format them, resize them, hide and show them, recover deleted partitions, convert FAT16/FAT32 to NTFS and check their integrity. You can even explore them to see the contents.

*The Wipe Data* section allows you to securely wipe a partition or entire disk. This is great if you are getting rid of an old disk or computer and want to make sure none of your personal data or licensed software is recoverable. It can also be used if you have a rootkit installed that you can't seem to get rid of. Rather a last resort, but this will make sure all remnants of malware are completely wiped out before you re-install everything from scratch.

The *Data Backup/Restore* section allows you to image an entire disk partition or disk. And of course, once you have used the program to create an image, you can use the restore function to recover. Note that this is not as convenient as using an imaging program like Acronis True Image or Norton Ghost that runs from within your normal Windows environment, but if you don't want to shell out a few bucks for one of those programs, this can do the job.

### Password & Key Finder

The *Password* section allows you to reset the password on any local account – including the Administrator account – to nul (no password). This is very handy if you forget your password and can't get logged into Windows.

*Key Finder* allows you to see the product key for Windows itself and any version of Microsoft Office from Office 97 to Office 2010. Both of these options are useful in case you decide you have to re-install Windows and don't have a record of your product keys. Just make sure you capture the keys before you re-install Windows!

### Windows Tools

Also included on the Start menu are a number of handy tools that come with Windows such as Calculator (not sure why you would need this during a recovery exercise), CMD prompt (always handy!), Network Configurator (in case the network is not automatically started), Remote Desktop Connection, Windows Explorer, Wordpad (handy to document what you do as you proceed), and more.

Interestingly, after installing *LiveBoot* 2012, Secunia Personal Software Inspector reported a security vulnerability in *ImgBurn.exe*, a component installed as part of *LiveBoot 2012*. This vulnerability was patched over 7 months ago. Shame on Wondershare for distributing software with security vulnerabilities that have long ago been patched.

I did not put all the tools to the test. After all, I did not really want to delete any partitions, recover the registry or perform a boot file recovery on my working systems. But I did try out some of the non-destructive tools and recovered some deleted files. Overall, *Wondershare's LiveBoot 2012* seems to be a powerful and well-rounded set of recovery tools for Windows computers.

### Bottom line:

Program version: *LiveBoot 2012* v7.0.1

Price: \$59.95

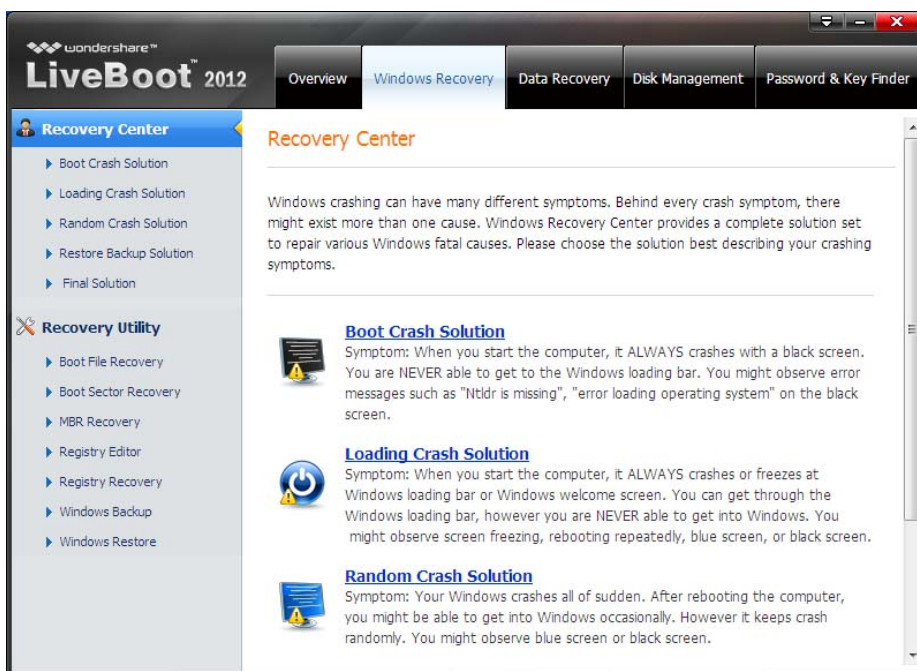
System requirements: 800MHz processor, 512 MB RAM (1 GB recommended). The web site notes that more than 1 GB RAM is required to run Data Recovery and Disk Management), CD-ROM drive or USB flash drive.

Windows XP/2003/Vista/7 required to create the bootable media.

Windows 98/ME/2K/2003/XP/NT/Vista/7 can all be targets for recovery operations.

Web site:

<http://www.wondershare.com/boot-cd/>



# OPCUG Free Software Guide—Part 25

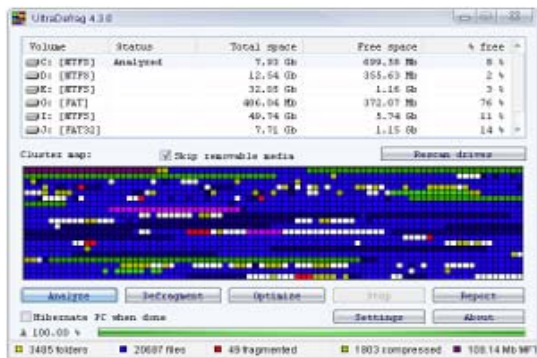
This guide features an annotated list of free computer programs. The software mentioned has not been reviewed (except where noted) nor have any tests necessarily been conducted. Consequently, no guarantees are provided that the individual programs will perform as described. Rather the list of available software is provided for the information of our members who may find one or more of the programs useful. If you try one of the listed items, you are encouraged to share your experience, good or bad, by providing a brief review of the program for a future issue of the newsletter.

## UltraDefrag

UltraDefrag is a powerful open-source defragmentation tool for Windows from SourceForge. It can defragment any system files including the registry and paging file. And, one of the main goals of the program is working as quickly and reliably as possible.

Current Release: Version 5.0.0

Web Site: <http://ultradefrag.sourceforge.net/>



## Everything

With this file indexing utility you can search disks using logical operands or – shades of DOS – the asterisk and question mark. The program will locate files and folders by name instantly. With some minor configuration it can even search across an entire home network

Current Release: Version 1.2.1.371

Web Site: <http://www.voidtools.com/>

## CCEnhancer

Do you use CCleaner to clean-up your PC? Would you like to make this utility even more powerful? CCEnhancer is a small add-in tool which provides support for CCleaner to process more than 450 additional programs.

Current Release: Version 2.3

Web Site: <http://thewebatom.net/software/ccenhancer/>

## Luxand Blink!

Logging into Windows has never been easier! Simply look into your webcam and you'll be logged into your account in the blink of an eye. Blink! employs advanced face recognition technologies to provide automatic, quick and reliable login for one, or multiple, computer users.

Current Release: Version 2.3

Web Site: <http://www.luxand.com/blink/>



## OpenedFilesView

Have you been unable to delete a file because it is in use by another process – but you have no idea which other process? This utility displays a list of all opened files on your system, and will show the process that opened each file. Once you identify the misbehaving process, you can kill it, so that you can delete the file as desired.

Current Release: Version 1.50

Web Site: [http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/opened\\_files\\_view.html](http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/opened_files_view.html)

## KompoZer

This is a complete web authoring system that combines file management and WYSIWYG editing capabilities. KompoZer has been favourably compared to Adobe's DreamWeaver. The program is designed to be extremely easy to use, making it ideal for non-technical computer users who want to create an attractive, professional-looking web site without needing to know HTML.

Current Release: Version 0.7.10

Web Site: <http://kompozer.net/>



## Gizmos Freeware Reviews

At this community-based web site you'll find the very best freeware programs, each selected by independent editors because of their quality and performance. Many of these programs are as good as or better than their commercial counterparts so why pay for what you can get for free?

Web Site: <http://www.techsupportalert.com/>

# 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 Canada Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa. Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) go until 10 p.m.

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# OPCUG



*Users helping users*

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

**B**ring your old computer books, software, hardware, and paraphernalia you want to GIVE AWAY to the General Meetings, and leave them at the table near the auditorium's entrance. Please limit magazines to publication dates of less than two years old.

You may TAKE AWAY any items of use to you.

Any items left over at the end of the meeting have to be taken back home by those who brought them in.

