



OTTAWA

# PC NEWS

Volume 29, Number 5

May 2012

## PRODUCT REVIEW

### Using DNS to avoid malicious sites by Chris Taylor

In the article *The Failure of Anti-virus* (*Ottawa PC News*, November, 2011), I talked about how there is no such thing as a safe web site any more. As reported by the security company Sophos, in 2011, they found 19,000 new malicious URLs *per day*. Eighty percent of them were compromised, legitimate web sites.

There are frequent zero-day exploits for vulnerabilities in common software. A zero-day exploit is one for which no security patch yet exists.

The bad guys are reverse-engineering security patches to develop and distribute malware that exploits vulnerabilities before people get the security patches installed that fix those vulnerabilities.

Time frames to react are getting shorter and shorter. Signature file updates in antivirus software is simply not a complete solution any more. New techniques are needed to deal with all this bad stuff.

One technique that has been around for years and is now baked into browsers or available as a plug-in, is to verify the reputation of a web site before allowing your browser to render that content of a web site. Here is an example of how it all works.

Say you want to browse to [www.CoolApps.net](http://www.CoolApps.net). The browser or a plug-in will first check the reputation of the web site through a trusted service. If it is not known to be bad, the browser or plug-in will allow the

browser to load the page.

Let's say the reputation service gets word that the site [www.CoolApps.net](http://www.CoolApps.net) has been compromised. They might find out through a report from a user. Or perhaps they have robots checking sites. As soon as they find out that a given site now contains malicious content, they can make a change in their reputation service so that the next time someone who uses their reputation service tries to go to the site, a code goes back to the browser to not load the page. Usually it will cause a warning page to be displayed indicating the site contains known malicious content. The user can then decide to over-ride the warning and go to the site anyway or they can heed the warning and avoid going to the site.

There was one part in the chain of events above that I skipped over.

Your browser has no idea about how to get to [www.CoolApps.net](http://www.CoolApps.net). It can only go to an IP address, such as 24.103.2.12. How does your computer figure out the IP address to go to? Enter DNS or the Domain Name System. You type in [www.CoolApps.net](http://www.CoolApps.net), your computer queries DNS to find the IP address and then your browser connects to the IP address.

What if you could combine DNS with a reputation service? That's exactly what Symantec has done with *Norton DNS for Home*. All you have to do is configure your DNS settings to point to Norton DNS for Home rather than the typi-

cal configuration where you point to the DNS server operated by your Internet Service Provider.

Once configured, all DNS queries go through the *Norton DNS for Home* server. If the site is not known to be bad, everything operates as usual. If the site is known to be bad, you get directed to a page that tells you why you are being prevented from reaching the site.

#### More than just malware protection

One of the cool things about *Norton DNS for Home* is that Symantec is actually running three DNS services. The first one blocks sites for security issues – malware, phishing, scam sites and web proxies. The second blocks based on security issues as well as pornography. The third blocks for security, por-

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Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

# May Raffle

Courtesy of the McAfee Canada, we have a copy of **McAfee All Access 2012**.

"All your devices. All your stuff. All protected." That is how McAfee describes All Access 2012. This powerhouse gives you complete anti-virus, anti-spyware, anti-phishing, anti-spam, anti-bot, 2-way firewall, safe web searching, encryption, wireless network security, digital file shredding, web content filtering, URL shortening, social network monitoring, on-line activity monitoring, and more.

And this one-user license will do this for all the devices you own - PCs, laptops, Android tablets, Macs, and smartphones (iPhone, Android, BlackBerry, or Symbian.)

McAfee All Access 2012 is valued at \$100.

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!

## April Prize Winners

**George Leir, Herb Gillingham and Denis Theriault** each won a doorprize (a copy of the Kaspersky Security Suite donated by Kaspersky labs) at our April general meeting.

Our raffle prize, a copy of Microsoft Office (Home/Student edition), was generously donated by our speaker of the evening, Pierre Roman. And **Harold McClemens** was glad of it when his ticket came up the winner!!

Thanks to our prize donators and congratulations to all the winners.

# Coming Up...

► Wednesday, May 9th, 2012

**Speaker:** Bob Walker, OPCUG

**Topic:** Accessible Computing

Accessible Computing including the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) from the W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative. This includes making web content accessible for disabled users as well as making content accessible for normal users using limited devices such as mobile phones and tablets. The presentation will include sections on accessible design, text to speech applications, speech to text applications and a brief section on mobile computing.

**Wednesday, June 13th, 2012**

PIZZA PARTY (at 6:30 pm)

The OPCUG is pleased to host the FIFTH Annual Pizza night to thank its members for their continued support. Please come early to ensure you have a choice of several popular varieties of Pizzas.

As usual, we will also supply several varieties of soft drinks, plus water and dessert.

The food will arrive at 6:30 pm under the big tent in the front yard of the Canada Science and Technology Museum.

Guests are welcome.

At 7:30 the regular meeting will take place.

## 2012 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, May 9 <sup>th</sup>	7:30 p.m. Auditorium of the <b>Canada Science and Technology Museum</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, May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Linux SIG	(suspended)	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, May 9 <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).

## ARTICLES

## Windows 8 Consumer Preview by Chris Taylor

**A**t the April meeting, Pierre Roman from Microsoft Canada gave us a great demonstration of the Consumer Preview of Windows 8. It can be downloaded by anyone from <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/consumer-preview>.

A question came up in the days following the meeting as to how people could provide feedback to Microsoft on issues they have found in this test version of Windows. Pierre responded as follows;

The best way to provide feedback is to participate in the Windows 8 Consumer Preview forum ([http://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/forum/windows\\_8](http://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/forum/windows_8)). On this

dedicated forum, you'll find thousands of other Windows enthusiasts who are testing our product, posting their experiences, and participating in the Windows 8 Consumer Preview online community. In particular, if you think you've encountered a problem that you'd like to have addressed in future releases of Windows 8, post a "Bug Report" about your issue on the Windows 8 Consumer Preview forum. In your post, describe what you encountered, any text or messages that were displayed, and other information that would help us reproduce your issue in our own testing environments. The product group in Redmond is monitoring the Windows 8 Consumer Preview forum and might ask you to post addi-

tional information to help us improve the experience.

If you want to share experiences within the OPCUG, the General conference area on The PUB is a great place. As well, we can discuss it at the Beginner's SIG which is held after the general meeting.

If we have enough interest, it might be a neat idea to have one of our early fall meetings dedicated to mini-presentations by members on their favourite - or most frustrating - aspect of Windows 8. If you would be interested, please let Jocelyn Doire (Program Chair) know.



## Speakers Wanted!

Do you know people that could make a presentation at one of our meetings?

Or even better, would you like to make a presentation? There are lots of subjects that we have never covered that would be of real interest to our members such as gaming, digital TV, 3D scanning, mapping, data center and many, many more. So, if you know someone or have suggestions, don't hesitate to let me or any of the members of the board of directors know about it. Any help to find presenters is more than welcome. Thanks in advance.

*Jocelyn Doire*  
OPCUG Meeting Coordinator

## Volumouse—Turn Volume Down Quickly

*by Sandy Berger*

**I**f you like to listen to music while you are working on the computer or browsing the Web, this free program is for you. It lets you control the volume with your mouse. Get a phone call or a summons for attention from your spouse? You can quickly and easily turn down the volume.

Volumouse (<http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/volumouse.html>) is a small program that lets you control the volume of your computer with your mouse. It turns your mouse's click wheel into a volume dial. Just hold down the Alt key and move the mouse wheel to increase or decrease the volume. It is quick and easy. No window to open. No menu to scroll through.

You can also set up other keys to activate Volumouse, if you like. And you can use it to control the volume when you are using Windows Media Player.

*This article first appeared in Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey News; Volume 36, Number 11; November, 2011 and is reprinted here with permission of ACGNJ (<http://www.acgnj.org>).*

# PRODUCT REVIEW

## Exploring Linux—Part 22 *by Alan German*

As noted in the previous article in this series, several of the backup packages available for Linux are based on the *rsync* file synchronization utility.

One such program is Lucky Backup (<http://luckybackup.sourceforge.net/>). This package lets you create a backup profile by specifying both the source and the target locations of the files to be processed. The resulting backup is a file-by-file copy of the source to the target disk. This requires a bit more disk space, due to there being no file compression, but it does make file retrieval very simple.

Lucky Backup lets you run a simulation so that you can see what is going to happen without copying any files. Then, when you run the actual file transfer there shouldn't be any surprises. But – surprise! While, on my system, the simulation worked just fine, the actual file transfer generated dozens of error messages in very evident red text. Most of these were to the effect that *rsync* copy operations were not permitted due to file ownership (*chown*) issues. However, the confounding issue was that the files were actually transferred, and the backup process did appear to have been successful.

Nevertheless, the production of so many "errors" did not induce a great deal of confidence in Lucky Backup, and life is too short to see if the error messages can be eliminated. So, for me, it was on to the next backup program.

My ultimate selection for backup software is Back In Time (<http://backintime.le-web.org/>). This program is available through the Ubuntu Software Centre and installs itself with an entry in Applications – System Tools. Actually, it creates two entries, one to simply run the program, and another to run the program as root (in order to process files for which the regular user doesn't have sufficient permissions).

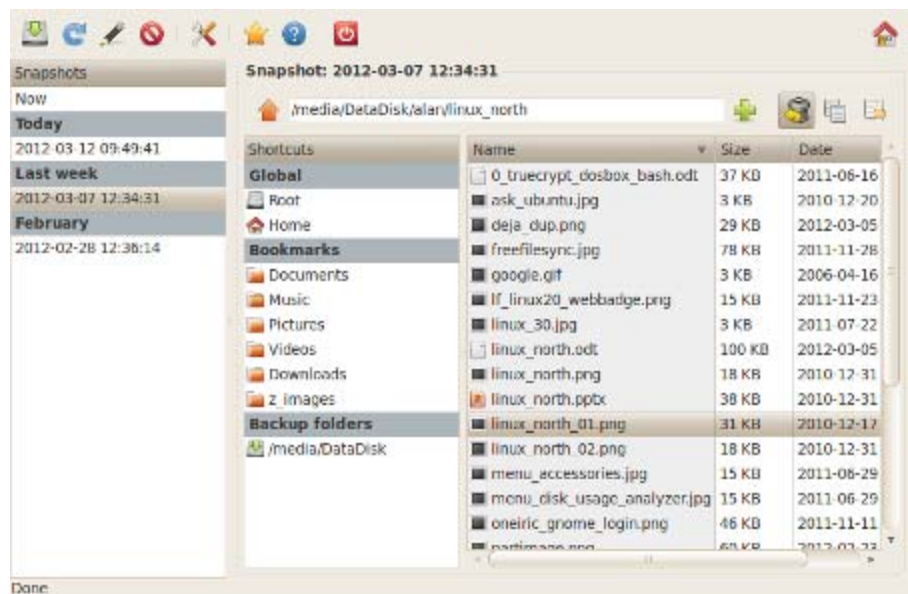
Running the program as a regular user works just fine for my purposes.

The first time the program is run, the settings dialogue box is displayed. The initial tab lets you specify the target drive, the folder where the backup files are to be stored, and select a schedule for the backup process. If, like me, you intend to run the backups manually just leave the default for the scheduled backup as "Disabled", rather than selecting one of the timed options (e.g. every 5 minutes, daily, weekly, etc.)

The next two tabs are for specifying the files and folders to be included in or excluded from the backup. In my case, I chose to initially include my entire data partition (/media/DataDisk) and then to exclude certain files and folders, such as SyncToy\*.\* (configuration files for Microsoft's SyncToy utility). Additional default entries on this list include items such as .\* that will eliminate backing up any hidden files or folders.

A number of tabs provide further program options, including the ability to automatically remove backup files after a given period of time or when disk space becomes an issue. There are a couple of "expert options" that the program says to only change "if you know what you are doing". Needless to say I gave the latter a wide berth!

Once the configuration has been set, running the backup process is as simple as clicking on an icon on the main menu bar. The program then makes what it terms a "snapshot". This and subsequent snapshots are listed by date in a panel on the left side of the program's window, together with an option to view the current state of the source disk ("Now"). Clicking on any snapshot causes a listing of the files and folders that the snapshot contains to be displayed in the right-hand panel of the program's window in a tree-directory format.



The beauty of this layout is that it is easy to browse through the entire backup, and identify any single file or folder that needs to be restored. Simply clicking on the "Restore" icon (a dustbin with a "return" arrow) causes the selected item to be restored from the target disk to its original location on the source. Now, what could be simpler than that?

*(Continued on page 5)*



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Exploring Linux... (Cont'd from page 4)

However, it's also possible to restore an entire snapshot. In my case, I click on the `/media/DataDisk` entry under "Backup folders" and then click on the "Snapshots" icon in the upper-right corner of the dialogue box. All of the available snapshots are now listed. Simply selecting one of the available snapshots allows me to either compare the backup to the current disk status, and display any differences, or to actually restore the backup.

One useful aspect of Back In Time is that it has the ability to create "hard links" of files within backups. This is an *rsync* feature whereby the backup process stores a link to a file that is already stored on an existing backup rather than creating a second copy of the file itself. Intended to save space by eliminating storage redundancies, the downside to this facility is that it isn't available when storing backups on FAT volumes such as (normally) external USB drives.

Perhaps the only real limitation of the program that I have found to date is the rather sparse documentation that is included in the software through the help menu. There is a comprehensive list of the various commands that are available, but a lack of detail on how to use some of them. Fortunately, Back In Time is pretty intuitive when it comes to basic usage, and there are many tutorials available on the Internet covering various versions of the program.

Back In Time functions very efficiently and seems to provide all the features that I need. Consequently, I think that this one is a "keeper" and, for now at least, will become my standard application for data backup under Linux.

For those who remain unconvinced, or who would like more details of the backup programs mentioned in this and the previous article, please check out the series of blog posts on the subject commencing with "Backing up a step" at <http://linuxnorth.wordpress.com/2012/02/23/backing-up-a-step/>.



*Articles by Leo!*



## Recovery Vs Installation Disks – What You'll Need If Your Hard Drive Crashes

by Leo A. Notenboom of [Ask Leo!](#)

**A**re you prepared if your hard drive crashes? Your recovery disk has helped you recover from certain types of failures. However is it always enough, or do you need an installation disk as well?

To answer the question, it is important to first understand the difference between a recovery disk and installation disk.

- The recovery disk, typically included with your system, contains information to recover your system. However, the disk relies on information still stored on your hard drive to do so.
- The installation disk contains all the information necessary to install system software, such as Windows, or application software, such as Quickbooks, on your hard drive. It doesn't require additional information from the hard drive to work.

Can you see the problem? A recovery disk works great to restore your system if you delete an application or corrupt the system. For example, if you accidentally deleted Windows, the recovery disk could find a copy of Windows in a hidden partition on your drive and use that to re-install your system from scratch. However, if your hard drive crashes, your recovery disk has no information to draw from. Now, you need either an installation disk, or image type of back up that backs up everything on your hard drive.

Here's the complicated part: installation disks aren't always included with your computer. If you don't have an installation disk, insist on one from your computer vendor. It is worth the extra cost. When you receive the disk, make sure to save it, and its product keys, in a safe place.

Remember, every recovery disk is created differently. There is no standard for what recovery disks should contain or what information it needs from the hard drive to restore your system. Just because the disk worked for one failure does not mean it will work for all.

For ultimate security, it is essential to back up your information with a reliable image back up. Taken regularly, image back ups protect your computer and can replace the need for an installation disk.

### Using DNS to avoid malicious sites (Continued from page 1)

nography and what Symantec calls *non-family-friendly* sites that deal with mature content, abortion, alcohol, crime, cults, drugs, gambling, hate, sexual orientation, suicide, tobacco or violence.

If you have a router that you use to connect multiple computers to the Internet, *Symantec* recommends that you configure the DNS settings in the router to use *Norton DNS for Home*. If all computers connecting to the Internet through your router are set up in the default configuration, they will point to the router for DNS and automatically use *Norton DNS for Home*.

## NETGEAR settings

54 Mbps Wireless Router WGR614 v4

**Basic Settings**

Does Your Internet Connection Require A Login?  
 Yes  
 No

Account Name (If Required) WGR614v4  
 Domain Name (If Required)

**Internet IP Address**  
 Get Dynamically From ISP  
 Use Static IP Address  
 IP Address 24 . 246 . 1 . 107  
 IP Subnet Mask 255 . 255 . 255 . 224  
 Gateway IP Address 24 . 246 . 1 . 97

**Domain Name Server (DNS) Address**  
 Get Automatically From ISP  
 Use These DNS Servers  
 Primary DNS 198 . 153 . 192 . 60  
 Secondary DNS 198 . 153 . 194 . 60

Setting a router to use Norton DNS for Home

While *Norton DNS for Home* is only for *personal/home* use, *Symantec* also runs a service for businesses.

To see how to configure your computer to use *Norton DNS for Home*, visit their site at <https://dns.norton.com/dnsweb/dnsForHome.do>

If you only want certain computers to use *Norton DNS for Home*, you can easily configure individual computers to use *Norton DNS for Home*. Individual computer configuration is also good when you want to use different levels of protection for different computers. For example, you might have your own computer use protection just for security reasons. On the kids' computer, you might go for protection for security, pornography and non-family friendly.

Control Panel Home

Local Area Connection Properties

Internet Protocol Version 4 (TCP/IPv4) Properties

Obtain an IP address automatically  
 Use the following IP address:  
 IP address:  
 Subnet mask:  
 Default gateway:

Obtain DNS server address automatically  
 Use the following DNS server addresses:  
 Preferred DNS server: 198 . 153 . 192 . 60  
 Alternate DNS server: 198 . 153 . 194 . 60

Setting DNS in Windows 7 to use Norton DNS for Home

Norton DNS for Home *blocking* access to a 'non-family-friendly' web site

Norton DNS

**Warning! Accessing this Web site is NOT allowed.**  
 You attempted to access: [www.pokerstars.com](http://www.pokerstars.com)  
 This is a known "Gambling" web site which is blocked as specified by your web content filtering policy.

Want more Norton?  
 See our special offers now!

# OPCUG Free Software Guide—Part 31

Compiled by  
Alan German and Dunc  
Petrie

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.

## tinySpell

Occasionally you need to check spelling in a program that doesn't include spell check. This is when tinySpell becomes handy. It allows you to easily and quickly check and correct the spelling in any Windows application.

Current Release: Version 1.9.40

Web Site: <http://tinyspell.numerit.com/>

## SlimDrivers

This SlimWare utility will scan your PC, identify any new drivers that are needed, retrieve them from the cloud, and automatically install the most current drivers available.

Current Release: Version 2.2

Web Site: <http://www.slimwareutilities.com/slimdrivers.php>



## Better Explorer

This replacement for Windows Explorer is specific to Windows 7. It has more features, for more convenience, including tabs and a ribbon interface.

Current Release: Version 2.0.0.731 Alpha

Web Site: <http://bexplorer.codeplex.com/>

## SUPERAntiSpyware

Detect and remove spyware, adware, Trojans, dialers, worms, key-loggers, hijackers, parasites, rootkits, rogue security products and many other types of malware threats.

Current Release: Version 5

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

## Free Opener

This utility works on any Windows-based system to help quickly and easily open Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Photoshop, PDF files, and many other file formats.

Current Release: Version 1.4.0.0

Web Site: <http://freewareupdate.com/offices-tools/4349-download-free-opener>

## RealWorld Paint

Use this free paint program to design your own logo, web buttons or icons like a pro. Remove blemishes, resize and crop your digital photographs, and even create animated GIF's. You may use RealWorld Paint free of charge for any purpose, commercial or non-commercial.

Current Release: Version 2011.1

Web Site: <http://www.rw-designer.com/image-editor>



## DirSync Pro

This powerful yet easy-to-configure, open-source tool will let you synchronize the content of one directory to another. It can compare (e.g. size, modified-date) and synchronize an unlimited number of directories and has a detailed logging-function.

Current Release: Version 1.44

Web Site: <http://dirsyncpro.org/>

## Ashampoo Burning Studio 6 Free

Tired of over-complicated CD burning applications? This program will burn discs quickly, easily, with maximum quality and minimum hassle. Specific features include multi-disc file backup, an integrated audio CD ripper, and support for the Blu-ray disk format.

Web Site: <https://www.ashampoo.com/en/cad/pin/0710/Offline/Ashampoo-Burning-Studio-6>



## WinToFlash

Want to make a working backup of your Windows installation media? WinToFlash will pull over the contents of a Windows installation CD or DVD to a USB memory stick and make the USB drive into a bootable replacement for the optical disk.

Current Release: Version 0.7.0026

Web Site: <http://wintoflash.com/home/en/>

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

<b>OPCUG Membership Fees:</b>	\$25 per year	
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Privacy Director		
<b>Wayne Houston</b>	<a href="mailto:privacy2@opcug.ca">privacy2@opcug.ca</a>	
Special Events Coordinator		
<b>Bob Gowan</b>	<a href="mailto:bob.gowan@opcug.ca">bob.gowan@opcug.ca</a>	
Beginners' SIG		
<b>Chris Taylor</b>	<a href="mailto:chris.taylor@opcug.ca">chris.taylor@opcug.ca</a>	613-727-5453
Linux / Open-Source SIG		
<b>(vacant)</b>		

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## How to get the OTTAWA PC NEWS by e-mail



**W**ant to get the newsletter electronically? There are two formats available: plain text and Adobe Acrobat PDF. Simply send a message in plain text to [listserv@opcug.ca](mailto:listserv@opcug.ca). Leave the subject blank and in the body of the message, type: **subscribe NewsletterTXT** (to get the plain text version) or **subscribe NewsletterPDF** (to get the Adobe Acrobat PDF version).

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And if you decide you do not need the printed version mailed to you anymore, simply let Mark Cayer (membership chairman) know. He can be reached at general meetings, as well as by e-mail at [Mark.Cayer@opcug.ca](mailto:Mark.Cayer@opcug.ca). You might want to wait until you have successfully received at least one issue electronically before opting out from the printed version.

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