TC/PC Exists to Facilitate and Encourage the Cooperative Exchange of PC Knowledge and Information Across All Levels of Experience

September 2021

General Meeting
Tuesday, September 14, 2021
7:00 PM

Avidemux—Video Editing App
Presenter: Sharan Walkani [Webinar]

Location: Accord, 1515 Energy Park Dr.
St. Paul, MN
and
Via Zoom

At a spring 2021 APCUG VTC, Sharan Walkani, who has degrees in Engineering and Computer Science plus over 25 years in the field, gave a presentation on Avidemux. Avidemux is an app for editing video files. It is open source software and free. In this webinar, Sharan gives us an introduction to this app, which is easy to learn and use. Beyond the editing features of Avidemux, a very practical use is the ability to convert videos easily from one format to another, such as from AVÏ or MOV formats to MP4 format. Sharan Walkani is active in the Southeast Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO) and IEEE and published the book "Linux and Internet Security." 💻

Tech Topics with Jack Ungerleider in Person and via Zoom at 6pm before the General Meeting.

The Digital Viking

The Digital Viking is the *official monthly publication of the Twin Cities PC User Group, a 501(c)(3)organization and an all-volunteer organization dedicated to users of IBM-compatible computers. Subscriptions are included in membership. We welcome articles and reviews from members.* The Digital Viking is a copyrighted publication and reproduction of any material is expressly prohibited without permission. Exception: other User Groups may use material if unaltered and credited.

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TC/PC News — In-Person Meetings Start Sept. 14, 2021..RSVP!

In Person Meetings start with the September 14th meeting. The meeting will also be broadcast via Zoom. To help meeting organizers plan, it is requested that you RSVP with "Yes-in person" or "Yes-Zoom" if you will be attending. Thanks! 💻

HD TV Technology and Content – What's New?
By Tom Burt, Vice President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
https://www.scscc.club, tomburt89134 (at) cox.net

One of my occasional club seminars is a review of High-Definition TV technology and sources of HD content. I decided to convert my seminar slide show to an article and update it to reflect the latest 2020 offerings.

HD TV Technology 2020
In 2020 virtually all larger sets (50 inch and up) for sale at retail outlets and on the web support the Ultra HD (aka 4K) resolution of 3840 (horizontal) by 2160 (vertical) pixels. This gives a picture aspect ratio of 16 by 9 and a total pixel count of about 8.3 million. There are some high-end sets with a so-called 8K resolution of 7680 by 4320 and a total pixel count of about 33.2 million.

Most newer sets also feature a wider color depth: 1024 levels each of red, green and blue, giving about 1 billion possible distinct colors. Most sets also feature High Dynamic Range which increases contrast range – making blacks darker and whites brighter.
Most HD TVs also include Smart TV features that make the set able to stream content from various Internet streaming TV services such as Netflix, Prime TV, Hulu, Apple TV, or Disney TV+.

The predominant screen technology is still liquid crystal (LCD), usually backlit by an array of white light-emitting diodes (LEDs). In HDR sets, these LEDs' brightness can be varied selective to help darken blacks and brighten whites. Other screen technologies include organic light-emitting diode (OLED) and quantum dot (QDot). Both of these give higher quality pictures but are expensive.

For example, here's an LG 65-inch LCD (LED-backlit) 4K Smart HDTV with HDR (model: 65UN7000PUD) priced at $500 at Best Buy. Its rating on Best Buy is 4.6 stars.

This is a quality set with lots of features and is likely all you need for a family room set. It has three HDMI input jacks, good for hooking up various external boxes.

HDTV sets with larger screens, more input

jacks, and more Smart features tend to cost more.

For example, here's an LG 82-inch LCD (LED-backlit) 4K Smart HDTV with HDR (model: 82UN8570PUC) priced at $1500 at Best Buy. Its rating on Best Buy is 4.1 stars.

This is a quality set with lots of features and a good choice for a home theater. It has four HDMI input jacks, good for hooking up various external boxes.

There are now HDTV 4K sets with screens as large as 110 inches.

Hooking Up Your HDTV

Your best results will come if you use high-definition media interface (HDMI) cables to connect various external boxes to jacks on your HDTV. Unless your connections are longer than 10 feet, there's no need to buy expensive HDMI cables at the big box store. Order the cheap ones from the Internet. Caution, as 8K sets and content become more widespread, you may have to use upgraded cables because they are carrying 16 times as much video data as regular HD content.

You may want to consider **wall-mounting** your HDTV if it's 65 inches or larger. If you do, spend the extra money to get a heavy-duty telescoping wall mount with a weight capacity substantially greater than that of your HDTV. The LG 82-inch set above weighs 102 pounds, so it would be no fun to lift, even for two people. For example, this Amazon Basics wall mount is $79 on Amazon and has a weight capacity of 132 pounds. It was rated 4.6 stars on Amazon.

A wall mount needs to be anchored to the studs in the wall it is mounted on. It may be necessary to mount a plywood panel to the studs of the wall and then screw the HDTV mount to the plywood panel. (i.e. This may be a job for professionals.)

HDTV Makers

The first-tier name-brand HDTV makers include **Samsung, Sony, LG, Vizio, Sharp, Toshiba, and Epson (projectors)**. There are many second-tier and house brand makers whose sets are also of very good quality and generally at better prices.

Where to Get HD and 4K Programming and Content

You can receive digital HD programming **over the air** from the broadcast TV networks. You need an antenna to receive the digital broadcasts and feed them into the antenna jack on your HDTV or set-top receiver. In Las Vegas, there are about 80 broadcast channels. Many are in Spanish and others may be hard to get because they are weak. There are a variety of indoor antennas, with and without powered amplification. If you can place these in a window, you may get decent reception.

You can also pay for a professional exterior antenna installation, which will deliver a much better signal to the HDTV. Check out **Mr. Antenna**.

You can pay for HDTV from Cox, DirecTV, Dish, or CenturyLink. These services are reliable and offer a vast array of channels that you can't get over the air. Their higher tiers can get quite expensive, especially after any promotional rates expire. It becomes an annual ritual to call up your provider and haggle for a reduction from the listed standard rates. Usually, you have to threaten to switch and then their retention representative comes through with a discount for another year.

You can watch HD and even 4K Blu-ray disks if you have a matching Blu-ray player. However, there is very little 4K Blu-ray content for sale. **Your 4K HDTV will automatically up-convert any incoming regular standard or HD content to "near 4K" resolution**.

You can also stream HD and some 4K content from the various paid Internet streaming services, such as Prime TV, Netflix, Hulu, Apple TV, Disney +, CBS All Access, AT&T TV Now, Sling TV, and YouTube TV. Some offer custom content and some offer a wide array of cable channels. A plus is that you don't need a special receiver – just an in-house network connection from your TV or a "Smart" box such as a Roku or Fire TV to your Wi-Fi router.

Many of the cable and broadcast networks also make recent episodes of shows available to stream from their websites. If your Smart TV or smart box has a web browser app (most do), you can go to the network's website and stream those shows through the Internet to your HDTV.

Commonly a household will opt for a mix of free and paid solutions to satisfy their needs for TV information and entertainment. A website that's very helpful for deciding what mix of services you need is **Suppose TV** (https://supposetv.com). You enter a list of "must-have" channels and the website will display which services offer that set of channels.
🖥

How Do I Remove a Virus from My Browser?
By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
www.scscc.club, dkretch (at) gmail.com

Our computer operating systems have become more secure, so developers of malware have turned their attention to a more vulnerable target, our web browsers.

Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Safari, and Opera are the browsers most of us use to connect to the Internet. All of these browsers can be infected by a redirect virus, despite their built-in security.

Redirect viruses, also known as hijackers, can make your online life very difficult
In this article, I'm going to describe the process of acquiring, identifying, and removing an infection from your browser. I'm going to focus on Google Chrome; the techniques are similar, yet slightly unique for each browser. Most users should be able to use the described procedures on their own systems, with small variations depending on the browser and underlying operating system (Windows, Apple, or some flavor of UNIX/Linux).

Redirect viruses can come from several sources.

Extensions

Hijackers can sometimes be "Trojan Horsed" in with browser extensions; extensions are small programs for a browser that serve the desired purpose, such as weather, price comparison, coupons, or productivity tools. If you install these extensions, you could unknowingly grant them the ability to influence your browser settings or change your preferences such as your home page or your default search provider. Extensions are usually the first place to examine if you suspect you might have an infection.

Spam emails
On at least a weekly basis I receive an email telling me that my account at Amazon, Facebook. eBay, PayPal, etc. have been frozen due to suspicious activity. The email contains a link to click on to resolve the problem. In reality, if I clicked on the link provided, my problems would be just starting. If you receive an email informing you of a problem with, for instance, your Amazon account, access your Amazon account the way you would normally if you think there might be a problem.

Social Media
Links from your Facebook or Twitter feed could also be rerouted in phishing, redirects, or browser hijacking. Facebook is notorious for allowing questionable items to appear in your

feed. Some bad links might be posted by unsuspecting Facebook friends who find it easier to copy and paste or just click Share than to vet an item. And no, Costco is not going to send you a $50 voucher if you just take this survey revealing all sorts of personal information.

Free software downloads from unreliable sites.

Hijackers can get added along with free software downloads. Often web sites will offer a desirable program but try to trick the user into downloading malware. Always look at the address bar to make sure you are downloading software from the legitimate provider's site.

Without realizing it, you could lose control of your browser by clicking on the wrong link on the wrong website.

Do I have a browser virus?

A browser virus on a PC or Mac is a browser hijacker that targets your browser. This type of malware is used to generate web traffic and collect information.

How do you find out if your browser has a virus? Here are the main symptoms:
- Your homepage redirects to a website different from what you expect.
- Unwanted extensions appearing in your browser (you might see icons at the top right side of your browser).
- Ads show up more often than they should, usually in unexpected places.
- Pop-ups and banners that advertise fake updates or software regularly appear.
- The link you click in search results redirects to dubious or possibly malicious websites.
  Your browser performance decreases dramatically no matter where you go on the Internet.

A virus can also ask you to update a program such as Adobe Flash Player or download any other tool (program) that would help you fix the problem it is creating. These warnings don't always mean that you have issues with the browser but should be suspect.

If you notice any of these signs, your computer browser is possibly infected with a virus.

Potential risks of a browser virus

As a browser hijacker, a pop-up virus is categorized as a potentially unwanted program (PUP). Once the malicious program attacks your computer, it starts modifying browser settings. For instance, it changes the default search engine and homepage, without asking for your permission.

The most serious problem created by having this virus is the ultimate invasion of your privacy; secretly harvesting as much of your personal information as possible to engage in identity theft. Some browser viruses are all about collecting personal details (IP address, location, searches, etc.) and sharing them with third parties. This may cause serious problems related to privacy and data security.

How to get rid of the browser virus
Delete unrecognized extensions
1. Go into your browser settings (in Chrome it is the three perpendicular dots at the upper right side of the browser).
2. Click on the Extensions tab.
3. Look for any extensions that shouldn't be there. If you find anything, select it and hit the Uninstall button to remove it.

Check your homepage and search engine settings
These settings appear in the settings area of your browser. In Chrome go into the browser settings and click on Settings. Make sure your homepage and default search engine are correct.

Additional things to check
1. Go to the Applications or Applications and Features folder and find any suspicious software. It may disguise as the desired application, so search for anything you don't remember downloading. Also, note the install date to identify possible problems and look at the last program you downloaded before noticed problems.
2. Check your Downloads folder for items recently downloaded from the Internet for clues about the possible problematic vector that has introduced the malware into your browser.
3. Once you detect the malware, drag it to Trash and empty it, or delete it and then remove it from your Recycle Bin.

Get rid of every trace of malware
After the above steps, download and perform a Malwarebytes scan as well as a full scan with your installed virus protection to make sure no harmful PUPs are left on your system.

Conclusions and Recommendations
To avoid getting browser viruses, pay attention to the websites you visit, files you download, and apps you install. Avoid using third-party software downloaders and installers - they usually include PUPs. Never ignore the warnings if your browser alerts you that a website is not secure.

Still, it's always better to prevent the problem than to try to deal with it. Browse wisely!
🖥

QR Codes and More

Barcodes containing useful info now show up in videos and presentations. Learn how to use those barcodes.
By John Krout, Writer/Presenter, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society
www.patacs.org, krout75 (at) yahoo.com

A QR code is a square 2-dimensional barcode that provides useful info such as a web page address (URL). QR codes can also contain email addresses, contact info, and just about any text. It is not the only square barcode out there. QR codes can be recognized by the square target blocks in the top two and bottom left corners.
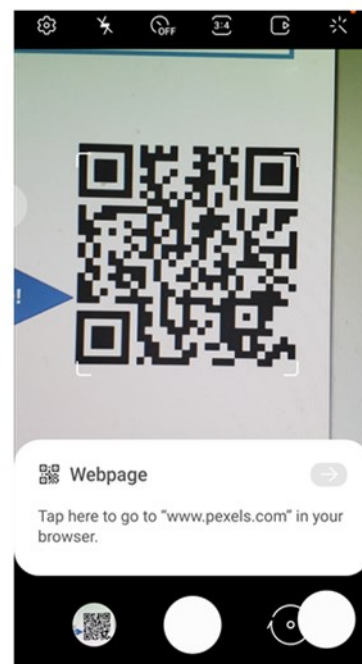
Illustration 1 shows a QR code example. This particular QR code provides a web page address for a site where short user-created videos can be downloaded for free. You have probably seen square QR code barcodes many other times in recent years.

Illustration 1: pexels.com/video

My presentations for PATACS frequently include web page addresses. In this pandemic era of virtual meetings, I have decided to include not only the actual URL but also the QR code containing the URL.

Anyone in the audience who wants to copy the URL from the presentation immediately can do so simply by using their smartphone. Chances are that you won't even need to install a barcode reader app on your phone. In recent iPhones and Android 10 phones, the camera app has been augmented to act as a QR code reader.

I tried my Samsung Galaxy S10 camera app. I pointed it at the computer screen where a QR code was visible in one corner of a presentation. The camera app immediately displayed the web page URL contained in the QR code, as you can see in **Illustration 2**. I did not even have to snap a photo of the QR code. The app gave me the option of tapping the address to open that web page. Opening the web page is ideal for quickly saving the URL for later bookmarking.

Illustration 2: Android 10 camera app reading QR code

Many retailers post QR codes enabling you to learn more about products.

MUNZEES

There is an outdoor game based on QR codes printed on small stickers posted outdoors. The name of the game is Munzees. I have not tried the game, though I know a few of my geocaching friends also play Munzees, and occasionally I see the small Munzees QR code stickers outdoors. Any small QR code in a place where it does not seem to identify any product or other specific object is quite possibly a Munzees QR code.

Illustration 3: Play Munzee URL

The Munzees game has its own website, www.playmunzee.com, and its own free phone app for communicating found Munzee QR codes to the website. That URL is encoded in **Illustration 3**.

CREATING QR CODES

I found that my Galaxy 10 Contacts app will generate a QR code for any record in my Contacts list. When I create a contact QR code, it appears on the phone screen. At that point, I can save the QR code as a graphics image file, or attach it to an email or a text message.

There is a website, https://www.qrcode-monkey.com/, which creates QR codes containing the info you provide. It provides some interesting features, such as multi-color QR codes and placement of a recognizable logo in a QR code. You can download, save, print, and share any QR code you generate on that site. The site provides this service for free. That URL is encoded in Illustration 4.

Illustration 4: QR code monkey URL

OTHER TYPES OF BARCODES

There are several types of barcodes in wide use.

The **Uniform Product Code** (UPC) barcode on products, which enables rapid checkout and helps the retailer manage inventory, encodes information in several parallel vertical bars. That is an example of a 1-dimensional (1D) barcode. There are phone apps designed to scan UPC codes and tell you if the same product can be found for a lower price elsewhere.

If you have a driver's license, it contains both a 1D barcode and a 2-dimensional (2D) barcode. That 2D barcode is a type called PDF-417, and it includes all the text info on your license as well as some other info identifying your license record in the Virginia computer system. The **American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators**

Illustration 5: AAMVA card standard URL

(AAMVA) created a standard for contents of the driver's license 2D barcode and updates the standard every few years. That standard is available online as a PDF document. You can read the field definitions in section D.12.5 of the PDF posted at the following URL, which is encoded in **Illustration 5**.

https://www.aamva.org/aamva2020dlidcarddesignstandard/

The 2D barcode on the driver's license is now scanned by Safeway at checkout if you buy alcohol. That means the Safeway computer system may capture a great deal of info other than your date of birth. Does the company save all that additional info about you? Doing so centrally would use up a gigantic amount of storage space. Possibly the stores store the info locally, on a store server. That localized info could be valuable if a company store is audited by Virginia ABC for underage sales.

Barcodes also typically show up on shipment box labels.

United Parcel Service uses a 1D barcode type for machine-readable package tracking numbers. If you have received UPS parcels in person, you have probably seen the UPS driver use a barcode scanner to scan the tracking number barcode and confirm the date and time of delivery of the parcel.

While the phone camera apps will read only QR codes, other free apps can be used to read a variety of barcodes. I downloaded one Android with the rather generic name Barcode Scanner to read the Virginia driver's license barcode. The same app reads QR codes, UPC codes, PDF-417 codes, CODE 39 (1D barcode type, which appeared above the address in correspondence I received from the Arlington County Government), Data Matrix (another square 2D barcode type), and some other types. I used that app to read the PDF-417 barcode on my Virginia driver's license.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout has been writing about creative uses of personal computers since the early 1980s. Until April 2020 he was a software documentation writer, contracted to support a major federal government computer system. Now he lives on his IRA and writes whatever he wants to. He resides in Arlington Virginia with his son, many computers and cameras, and too many cats.

💻

React 7-In-1 Vehicle Emergency Multi-Tool

by George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society
Tucson Computer Society
www.aztcs.org, **actuary110 (at) yahoo.com**

Here's a handy gadget! It's multipurpose and has seven uses.

1. It can be used in your car to charge any USB chargeable device. You plug it into your car's power outlet. The enclosed battery will charge if needed and any of our additional devices that you connect to it will charge as well. There is a battery charge indicator to tell you how much charge is available.
2. It can be used away from your car as a charger for any USB chargeable device
3. It is a flashlight. A button on the side of the React turns on the light. Further presses cycle through low and high options. A long press turns it off.
4. Using the side button also gives you access to a red flashing light.
5. A button on the other side of the React turns on the S.O.S alarm.
6. React includes a seat belt cutter, available for emergency use. The blade is protected so it won't slice your fingers, but it is strong enough to slice a seat belt.
7. React can also be used to break window glass in an emergency. It should not be used to break laminated, windshield, or pane glass.

The manufacturer recommends that the tool be replaced after using either the glass breaker or the seat belt cutter.

The tool comes with a cable that can be used for charging the internal battery. The unit also comes with a User Manual.

The unit has a one-year limited warranty.

This is a very handy tool to keep in your car for use when needed.

React by LimitlessInnovations
Price $40

https://limitlessinnovations.com/collections/usb-chargers/products/react-7-in-1-vehicle-emergency-multi-tool-powered-by-chargehub

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Most SIGs will meet at Edina Executive Plaza, Conference Room #102, 5200 Willson Road, Edina, MN
 Confirm with a SIG group if they meet elsewhere.
For more info contact the SIG Leader(s) listed here.

Get SIG announcements!
Link from www.tcpc.com

Board of Directors*
All members are welcome! Check www.tcpc.com for location.
Selected Saturday mornings

Linux on Saturday
This is for the Linux newbie and those trying to come over from Microsoft to a different operating system.
Second Saturday @ 9 AM-Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
jack@jacku.com

Tech Topics
Technical presentation/discussion on various technical topics from the following areas:
- **Web/Internet**
- **Mobile Devices and Apps**
- **Playing with Programming**
- **DIY (3D Printing, R-Pi, other hobby electronics, etc.)**

Second Tuesday @ 6:00-7:00 PM
Every month
Right before the general meeting.

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
jack@jacku.com

Microsoft Access
All levels. Presentations by expert developers within the group and by MS reps.
Third Saturday 9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
skuhlmey@hotmail.com

Microsoft Office
Addresses the use, integration, and nuances of the Microsoft Office applications.
Combined with Systems on Saturday
Third Saturday of the Month
9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
skuhlmey@hotmail.com

Directions to **Accord, 1515 Energy Park Drive** for **General Meetings**:
From I-94 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go north on Snelling Avenue about one mile to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.
From I-694 or Hwy 36 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go south on Snelling Avenue past Como Avenue to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.

Directions to **Edina Executive Plaza** for **Systems on Saturday, Access, Word and Picture Perfect SIGs**: Take Highway 100 to the 50th Street/Vernon exit. [If you have come from the north, cross back over Highway 100 to the east side.] Take the first right and go past Perkins [The golf course will be on your left.] and continue on the east frontage road (Willson Road) to the next building—5200 . There is ample parking in the building's lot. Conference Room #102 is on 1st floor.

Help yourself by helping others!
Join the team & share your knowledge with others.

Contact TC/PC at www.tcpc.com

Meetings start at 7:00 PM (9:00 AM on Saturday) unless otherwise noted. *Virtual Meetings during Covid pandemic.*

September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am-Noon
12	13	14 7pm General Mtg Audacity & Avidemux 6pm Tech Topics	15	16	17	18 Microsoft Office SIG (including Access) 9am-Noon
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

October

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am-Noon
10	11	12 7pm General Mtg TBA 6pm Tech Topics	13	14	15	16 Microsoft Office SIG (including Access) 9am-Noon
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Twin Cities PC USER GROUP

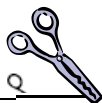## You have just read an issue of The Digital Viking.

Would you like to receive this delivered directly to your email or business each month?

As a member of TC/PC, the Twin Cities Personal Computer Group, one of the benefits
is reading this monthly publication at www.tcpc.com..

As a member of TC/PC, you may attend any or all of the monthly Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings and be eligible for
software drawings. The small membership fee also includes
access to real-live people with answers via our helplines, discounts, and various other perks.

Does membership in this group sound like a good way to increase your computer knowledge?

It's easy to do! Simply fill in the form below and mail it to the address shown.
(If you use the form in this issue, you will receive an extra month for joining now.)

9/21

Here's the info for my TC/PC Membership:

Full name_____

Company name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

❍Home ❍Business ❍Change address: ❍Perm. ❍Temp. 'til _____

Home phone_____ Work phone_____

Online address(es) _____

Where did you hear about TC/PC? _____

❍ I DO NOT want any of my information disclosed.
❍ I DO NOT want to receive any mailings

I'm signing up for:

❍ Individual/Family Membership ($18)
❍ Business Membership ($100)
If an existing member your # _____
Make checks payable to:
Twin Cities PC User Group
341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

http://www.tcpc.com

❍ Check #_____ ❍ Bill me
❍ New member ❍ Renewal ❍ Prior member
I'm interested in:
❍ Training classes ❍ Volunteering
❍ Special Interest Groups: New User, Access,
etc.
List here:

Administrative Use Only Rec'd_____ Chk#_____

September 14, 2021
7:00 pm
General Meeting

Audacity & Avidemux

Location: Accord,
1515 Energy Park Dr
St. Paul, MN
or
Via Zoom

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP

FIRST CLASS MAIL