Radio Days – 2014-03-29

Tip of the Week – Too Many Email Copies

Over the last few weeks I have had a number of clients who have received multiple copies of each email. This annoys them, particularly when they do not get the email which they know has been sent. There seem to be two causes for this problem:

- Not staying online for long enough. This is the most common cause.
- Internet speed too slow.

Stay online

The first problem is easy to fix: just stay online until all your emails have been downloaded. If you disconnect from the internet, turn your computer off or stop your email program before all your emails have been downloaded then the whole process will start again from the beginning next time you start downloading emails.

If you are not sure whether your emails are still downloading you can check using a program like NetWorx to see if there is traffic on your internet connection. This is a free program and shows, amongst other things, the speed at which data is flowing down your wires.

I have set up my copy of NetWorx to show recent upload and download activity by a click on the NetWorx icon in the notification area (next to the clock on your taskbar). I click on the up arrow in this area to make the icons which I use all the time visible: select *Show icon and notifications*.

Slow internet

If your internet has been throttled because you have used all your monthly allowance you may notice that your emails stop arriving and that can cause troubles until your connection speeds up at the beginning of your new internet month. There is nothing that you can do about this except wait patiently

Deleting duplicate emails

In either case you can use MailWasher to delete the emails which have already arrived before starting another email download session. I have long recommended MailWasher as a means of checking your emails to remove any probable viruses but its ability to remove emails before they reach your inbox is invaluable in this context. Just sort your incoming emails by date then delete all those which have already arrived: the only ones left are those you want.

How email works

Emails are simple to understand because the basic idea dates from the earliest days of the internet: around the middle of the 1970s. Computers, in those days, were very small and slow compared to today's computers so all the programs had to be small and therefore simple.

Each email is sent as a single item to an address. When it reaches the server which stores emails for that address the emails waits there, much as a letter waits in your letterbox. Then, when you go to collect your emails, they are sent, one by one, from your email server to your inbox.

It is only when all emails have been received that all emails can be removed from the storage area at your email server. Until all the emails have been received none of your emails are removed from your server. This is why, when you go to get your emails again, they are all still there waiting to be downloaded again.

The only way to beat this is with a program like MailWasher.

Copying Photos to Your Computer

Far too many people find that getting even one photo from their camera to their computer is a task too large. It has swamped many people and I suspect that this is because they have no idea of how to handle files. This includes all sorts of things like

- Where files go
- How to get them there
- How to find them
- How to view them
- How to print them
- How to email them
- How to let people see them

Let's talk about all of these in turn.

Where files go

It is easy to find out where photos go. Depending on your version of Windows, this is either *My Pictures* or *Pictures*. The easiest free way of getting them there is to use a program called *Picasa*. This name is not, as so many people seem to think, the name of a Spanish painter: his name is *Picasso*.

Picasa will copy your photos from your camera, or your camera's memory card, directly to *My Pictures* or *Pictures*. Picasa also makes it is easy to place all copied photos into a new folder whose name is either the date that the photos were taken or the date that you copied them. I always use the date that the photo was taken because that keeps similar photos together.

If you have set the program up well the first time that you copy photos, Picasa ensures that all your photos always go into a folder inside the *(My) Pictures* folder and that you can always find each one when you want it.

How to get them there

Using Picasa you would connect your camera to your computer, or insert your camera's card into a slot in your computer (which is my preferred method), then run Picasa. When you click on *Import* at top-left you will see a list of importable images and, at the bottom of the screen, some options. I set these options as follows:

- **Import To:** *My Pictures*
- **Folder Title**: *Date Taken (DD-MM-YYYY)*
- **After Copying:** *Leave Card Alone*

Then you click on *Import All*. It really is as easy as that! After a while, depending on how many photos there are on your card and how large each one is and how fast your computer is, you will see all your photos in folders ready to be viewed, emailed and printed. All you have to do is work out what you want to do with each photo.

How to find them

Finding your photos in Picasa is as simple as it gets. There are two easy ways to keep track of where your photos are:

- Renaming folders
- Using *Albums*

I find that both of these methods are useful and I use them both.

Renaming folders

If you have lots of photos you will have to wade through more images than you thought possible so I change the name of my folders while Picasa is open. This is simple: click on *Windows » (My) Computer* and Windows Explorer will open. You can then navigate to the *(My) Pictures* folder where you will see a number of folders whose names are all dates.

If, for example, you went to your family's Christmas party on 25 December 2013 then you could change the folder name from **2013-12-25** to **2013-12-25 Christmas at Mum's**. This will allow you to find all folders named either **Christmas** or **Mum** using a program like UltraSearch.

There are two simple ways to rename a folder:

- Double-click on the folder name then type the new name
- Right-click on the folder name then left-click on *Rename*

When you are ready to begin typing the new part of the name (*Christmas at Mum's*) please remember to press *End* first so that you don't overwrite the original folder name: *2013-12-25*. Please remember: when you see text with a blue background, Windows expects that you will want to overwrite it with new text. You do not want to overwrite the date part of the folder's name: this is why you need to place the flashing insertion point after the date.

If you do this while Picasa is running it will notice the change of folder name. If Picasa is not running then you will appear to have lost that folder next time you run Picasa. This is not a fault, just a consequence of how Windows works.

Using albums

Albums are how Picasa groups photos from different folders together. An album is not a new folder: it is just like a music playlist. Just as a music playlist can contain songs from various artists and albums, so Picasa albums can contain photos from various folders. Adding a photo to an album does not move the photo anywhere: it adds a link to the photo into the album.

To add photos to an album (and perhaps create a new album) select those photos which you wish to add to the album. Selecting one photo is easy: just click on it. This will place a thumbnail of the photo in the *Selection Area* at the bottom of the Picasa screen. Then click on the blue button to the right of the selection area to add it to an album or create a new album and add the photo to this new album.

You can add more than one photo at a time using the standard selection methods. The first method is to click on one photo then *Ctrl-Click* on all the other photos that you wish to add, and the second method is to click on the first photo of a contiguous group then *Shift-Click* on the last photo in this group. Again, click on the blue button to add these selected photos to on album, either new or existing.

Please note that a photo can be in more than one album. For example, you could have one album entitled *Parties* and another entitled *Beach*. A photo of people at a beach party could then be placed into both albums.

How to view them

Viewing photos in Picasa is easy: just select a folder or an album and you will see some or all of the photos, depending on the number in that album or folder. You can vary the size of each photo in this view using the slider at the bottom of the screen.

Double-clicking on a photo will open it in the Picasa viewer. This viewer also allows you to make simple edits like cropping your photo or changing the exposure. If you need to make more adventurous changes you will need a program like Photoshop or Photoshop Elements.

You can also open your photos in other viewing programs like IrfanView by right-clicking a photo then selecting that program if it is available.

Selecting Photos

A skill which is used in a number of areas in Picasa is selecting photos. This is explained above and involves clicking, ctrl-clicking or shift-clicking on one or more photos. This selects these photos and places them in the selection area at the bottom of the screen.

How to print selected photos

Printing photos in Picasa is easy. When you have selected all the photos to be printed just click on the *Print* button to the right of the tray to display the printing dialogue box. Here you can make all sorts of adjustments:

- Number of prints per page
- *Shrink to fit* or *Crop to fit*
- Border and text options
- The printer to be used
- The number of copies

When you have selected your options just press the *Print* button. You can also remove one or more photos from the selection to be printed or cancel the print.

How to email selected photos

Emailing your selected photos is even easier than printing them! Just click on the *Email* icon next to the selection area. This will open your email program with a new email ready for the address and any message. When you have completed these fields click on *Send*.

How to share an album

Further Information

NetWorx	www.softperfect.com
MailWasher Free	www.mailwasher.net
MailWasher Pro	www.firetruct.com
Picasa	http://picasa.google.com.au
UltraSearch	www.jam-software.com/ultrasearch
IrfanView	www.irfanview.com