

East SIG Report – February 2017

The meeting commenced with **Paul Woolard** welcomed members to this the first meeting for 2017. Q&A conducted by President **George Skarbek** then followed.

- Q: I have a number of small programs that do not have an installation file, but are run simply by clicking on a shortcut from the programs exe file. As there isn't an installation file, these programs do not get listed in the alphabetical "All Apps" menu. I can right click on the exe file and send a link to the Taskbar or the Start Menu, but these actions do not add the program to the "All Apps" menu. How can I add these exe programs to the "All Apps" menu?
- A: You will need to add these exe programs manually. Create a short cut and copy the shortcut to the C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\StartMenu\Programs folder.
- Q: I have a WD media player that shows 3 PCs on my network but not a fourth, an ASUS T100. The T100 shows up in devices and I can ping it. However it is not showing up on the network. Can you suggest a solution?
- A: Pinging should find discoverable machines on the network. You could try disabling the firewall and see if that has any effect. If it does, you can tell the firewall to add an exception. However the firewall should know that the T100 is downstream of the router and not block it. It could be the network name is not the same for all devices so that is something worth checking.
- Q: I have a laptop running Windows 8.1 which is set to automatically download Windows updates. Last September it failed to install updates and I have been trying to do this manually ever since without success. When I click the "Check for Updates" button, the computer starts on the "Looking for Updates" screen and sits there for hours without ever finishing. Google shows that it's not an uncommon problem but there doesn't seem to be a solution. Can you suggest a solution?
- A: You are correct, this is not an uncommon problem. The first thing to do is to look at the updates history and stroll through the updates and see if any have failed. If one update has failed, Windows updates may be trying to download the same file and it keeps on failing. Tell Windows to ignore the failed file and Updates may then get past that file. If that fails try using the "Windows Update Troubleshooter"
- Q: I've found that my Windows 10 machines can't see Windows XP machines on my network. The Windows 10 machines can see all other machines but for some reason couldn't see XP machines.
- A: I recycle old PCs to give to needy groups and have not had any trouble like you describe. On my network my Windows 10 machine can see Windows XP machines and vice-versa, so I don't think your problem is a blanket issue with Windows 10. It could be your antivirus or firewall that is preventing you seeing the Windows XP machines so try switching them off.
- Q: Recently while on a trip an SD card failed. When I returned home I tried to recover the data on the card without success. Is there any way to fix the SD card?
- A: There is likely to be no easy fix to your problem. Possible causes are a corruption on the SD card, the file system could be missing, the controller on the SD card may have failed or possibly someone deleted the files, although the latter is less likely. If the directory is scrambled, all the files are still on the SD card but the pointers are incorrect. If this is the case it's worth trying a free undelete program to recover your data. You will find some very good undelete programs on Gizmo's Freeware site <http://www.techsupportalert.com> that would be worth trying. That is the only easy option to this problem. Failing that you can go to a data recovery service but these will be very expensive. There will normally be a nominal charge to

give a prognosis before full payment is required. If the controller on the SD has failed it is not fixable but the data is recoverable at a cost.

After Q&A the next presentation was “**What to consider when buying a new PC**” by **George Skarbek**. Upgraders should first ask themselves, why do I need a new PC, what doesn’t my old PC do that I need and should I buy a laptop or desktop.

An old computer can be sped up by stopping unwanted programs from loading automatically on start-up, as these programs take up valuable memory. George suggested Acrobat Reader, QuickTime, programs that adjust audio and graphic card settings are some of the programs he stops from loading automatically. Stopping them loading automatically doesn’t delete them as they can be run later when needed. George went on to outline how this is done in the various versions of Windows. When these unwanted programs update, they will most likely reappear at Start up so will have to be removed again. A fresh reinstall of Windows will also give an old PC a significant boost as it removes unused programs that build up over time. If you use these tips you may be able to prolong the life of your old PC.

If you rarely need the portability of a laptop, a desktop PC will give you more “bang for your buck” and it will also be upgradable. You can also save money by using your existing keyboard, mouse and monitor.

George outlined the major components (CPU, RAM & HDD) to be considered when buying a new PC. Depending on what the PC is used for will determine the specifications of the components you need. George then went on to recommend the specifications for each of these components for a user who has minimal computing demands such as using email and internet browsing through to a user who might need multiple complex programs open simultaneously or for serious video rendering.

George noted that the first item to consider before all else for a fast machine, is to use a Solid State Drive (SSD). This is followed by the selection of the CPU. George recommends Intel CPU’s at present but check the generation of the CPU as some advertising may try to sell older generation chips as current model computers.

After a short break **Stuart Bedford** spoke on “**Using social media, the internet and Australian Consumer Australian to enforce your legal rights**”. Stuart gave another very informative presentation, some of which I have copied from below. The key issues discussed were, know your consumer rights (refer <http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au>) and what to do when companies do not understand Consumer Law and will try to bluff you either deliberately, out of ignorance or even plain arrogance.

Australian consumer law states:

1. You have the right to ask for a repair, replacement or refund under the Australian Consumer Law consumer guarantees for products and services bought on or after 1st January 2011.
2. Your rights under the consumer guarantees do not have a specific expiry date and can apply even after any warranties you’ve got from a business have expired.
3. It is against the law for businesses to tell you or show signs stating that they do not give refunds under any circumstances, including for gifts and during sales.
4. You are entitled to return a product if you believe that there is a problem.
5. You are generally responsible for returning the product if it can be posted or easily returned. You are entitled to recover reasonable postage or transportation costs from the business if the product is confirmed to have a problem, so keep your receipts.

6. The retailer who sold you the product or service cannot refuse to help you by sending you to the manufacturer or importer. You can approach the manufacturer or importer directly, however, you will only be entitled to recover costs from them, which include an amount for reduction in the product's value and in some cases compensation for damages or loss.
7. You cannot demand a repair, replacement or refund from the manufacturer.

It is essential that you keep receipts. Stuart uses a Smart Phone app called ScanBot to record all his receipts which are stored on the phone and in the cloud.

Two useful sites Stuart recommends to search for and provide feedback are <http://www.productreview.com.au> (a useful site for reviews of products and services) and <https://whirlpool.net.au> (for discussions and reviews of products and services.)

Neil Muller