❖ Dan's Desktop ❖

Greetings!

Dear Clients,

I thought I would take this opportunity to say hello to my customers and to pass on some information and experiences you might find helpful. I'll publish another issue of this newsletter whenever I have sufficient information to do so.

If you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please don't hesitate to call me at
 667-2754.

Hope all is fine with you and your family and thanks for being one of my clients.

Sincerely,

Dan

Recordingfamily memories, upgradingcomputer memory, and having funare the keys in this issue.

PC Fun: MicroSoft Best of Entertainment Pack

This is a terrific set of about a dozen games from the three or four volumes MicroSoft has put out under the *Entertainment Pack* title. Games include some interesting solitaire variations, Tetris, Taipei (a tile matching puzzle), and the highly addictive JezzBall. If you liked solitaire and minesweeper, you'll probably enjoy these games as well.   I bought mine for under $20 on sale at Lechmere.
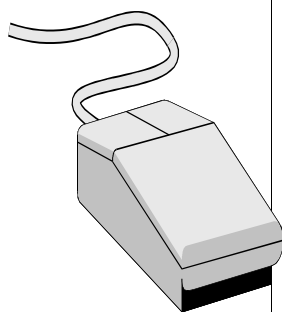
Software Discovery: *Family Tree Maker*

I know a number of my clients are using their computers to record family history and genealogy. So when I spotted this software at the Costco Warehouse in Waterbury, I picked up the box and read its features. I was impressed by its claims, so I spent the $35 it cost to buy it.

Family Tree Maker has really impressed me with its ease of use and features. In just a few hours, I was able to enter my extensive family genealogy information and generate all kinds of interesting charts and reports. The charts and reports can be generated from the perspective of any one who is listed . The software allows you to record information about multiple spouses and also to record other facts including freeform text. Using features built into windows it claims to also be able to include photographs--but I haven't tried this yet.

The charts and reports are nicely formatted and include family pages, ancestor and descendant diagrams, an index listing, family group report, and a list of all descendants of any given person. Another interesting feature is the ability to make a calendar that lists the birthdays and anniversaries of all living relatives, along with the appropriate number of years.

I was very much impressed by the capabilities of this software. It also allows you to easily cut and paste information either within it or from other documents and software. I was surprised by how quickly it generated the various reports--although some of this may relate from the 8 meg of memory I now have!

Please call me if you would like more information about this.

Memory Upgrade Can Be Memorable

Installing the memory module into the mother board turned out to be a bit more work than I had expected.

I recently upgraded the memory on one of my PCs from 4 meg to 8 meg. Upgrading the computer's memory allows some applications to run faster and facilitates having several programs active in memory at once. Some programs require more than 4 meg to work at all--including a programming package I am considering to buy.

I purchased an 8 meg module at Sam's Club for under $200, brought it home, took a deep breath, and opened up my PC for the first time. (Before opening up the PC, I disconnected the power supply and all the peripherals. I also took great care to avoid any static electricity which could seriously damage the PC.)

Unfortunately, the new memory module did not live up to its billing--it was not compatible with my Packard Bell PC. I returned it to Sam's and was able to exchange it for the correct module which, luckily, they had just received.

Installing the memory module into the mother board turned out to be a bit more work than I had expected. I needed to remove my TV tuner card, which is installed directly above the mother board, in order to have room to work. I then just carefully inserted the memory module into place on the mother board. (The mother board contains the core electronics of the PC.) Reinstalling the TV tuner card turned out to the most difficult part of the process.

I also looked "under the hood" of my IBM and AST PCs. The memory module I used for the Packard Bell would have worked for the AST. The AST actually had room for three additional memory modules. The IBM computer had entirely different requirements.

Should I need to further expand the memory of my Packard Bell computer, an additional board will need to be installed.

Memory modules can be purchased in various sizes, including 1 meg modules. Usually you will need at least two of these. I suggest going with the 4 meg module if you need to upgrade. This module was under $200 at Sam's Club. It is probably $40 or more higher at a dealer. Many dealers will offer to install the memory for you for a fee of $20 or so.

Although I will not install internal hardware upgrades to your machine, I would be happy to stand over your shoulder to guide you through the process of installing additional memory, if you need it.

Additional Services Available

Computer Time
Please keep in mind that you may use one of my computers and its software for $5 per hour or $25 per day. This may be useful for either test driving some software or to make use of software for which you have only limited use. Some of my computers have CD ROM and I am developing a fairly extensive CD rom library. One of the computers is also capable of capturing video images from a VCR or camcorder.

Custom Services
In addition to tutoring and consulting, I would be happy to do customized work for you such as develop spreadsheets, publications, or programs. Rates for this vary with the job. An estimate is provided up front.

Shopping Service
I now provide a shopping service where I will purchase software for you for reimbursement of the cost plus a $15 fee which includes delivery and installation of the software on your PC. All software is new and in the original sealed packages. Whenever possible I purchase the software at warehouse clubs or on sale in order to save money.

If you are looking for a particular type of software or a specific title, please call me. I'll keep an eye out for it and watch for a good price.

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