

Dan's Desktop

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Technobabble

VIRUSES MORE WIDESPREAD

This spring and summer I have dealt with more virus infected PCs than in the past 8 years combined. Particularly nasty was the Klez virus. At one point it was estimated that it had been attached to one of every 400 emails. In all cases that I encountered, clients either had no virus protections or it was severely outdated. At this point, not having up-to-date virus protection virtually guarantees that you will get a virus. I highly recommend the current edition of Norton Antivirus over others on the market. Besides doing a good job intercepting viruses, it automatically updates itself whenever you go online without any intervention from you.

*Please check your antivirus software **NOW** and be sure it is up-to-date. It should show virus definitions dated within the past week. If your subscription has lapsed, renew it. If your program is more than a couple of years old, buy the latest version.*

PALM NICE DEVICE PRICE

If you have been thinking about buying a Palm or similar device, now might be the time. Prices have fallen significantly over the past year. Low end models with a great deal of capability are available for under \$100. Some expandable ones are now under \$200.

HARD DRIVE AND PC PRICES

As I write this the market is glutted with PCs and there is a lot of talk of coming bargains. One \$1000 model (after rebate) includes a Pentium 4 2.4 GHz processor, 256 MB RAM memory, 40 GB hard drive, 17 inch monitor, DVD-ROM drive, and a 24/10/40 CD-RW drive. Lower end models that will do the job for most people can be had for a few hundred less.

Hard drives : 40 GB = \$90, 60 GB = \$100, 80 GB = \$130.

NEW ZIP DRIVES

Omega has come up with a new Zip drive that holds 750 MB of data. It can also read, but not write to, Zip 100 and Zip 250 disks. The individual disks are very pricey compared to CDs. Writing to a Zip drive is usually faster and easier than writing to a CD and a CD holds just 650 MB.

Rate Changes

As of November 1, 2002 my hourly rates will be:

General Consulting/Tutoring\$50 per hour
Access Database Programming.....\$60 per hour

McAfee Spam Killer

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

I have been getting increasing volumes of junk emails. On some days I was receiving over 30 spams (the nickname for junk email). I was at the point that, during my vacation, I had to check emails in order to make sure that my mailbox did not get thoroughly filled with junk. In a span of three days I had nearly 200 emails—only a few were legitimate. Upon returning from vacation I decided that I didn't want to deal with this any longer.

EMAIL FILTERS

Email programs, including Outlook Express that I use, include the capability to automatically delete emails that come from certain senders, have certain subject lines or whose text has certain phrases. The problem is that it is almost a full time job to try to figure out what to use as filters without inadvertently deleting messages that you do not want deleted.

SPAM KILLER TO THE RESCUE

I had read a number of favorable reviews of *McAfee Spam Killer*. When I returned to work after my vacation, I immediately ordered it online and downloaded it in just a few minutes over my high speed Internet connection. After customizing some settings Spam Killer cleaned up my email so that reading email was again a pleasant experience. When it kills an email a gunshot goes off. If it detects possible Spam, a dog barks. Good email cause my email program to start so that it can be retrieved. Spams are stored within Spam Killer so that they can be reviewed in case there is something that was deleted by mistake. This seems to be pretty rare.

IMPORTANT SPAM KILLER AND EMAIL SETTINGS

Here are some important pointers to setting up Spam Killer:

- Turn off your email program's settings that check for new mail every few minutes, but keep on the setting that checks for new mail when it starts. Do not keep the email program running.
- Be sure to set up all your email accounts in Spam Killer using the appropriated servers, ids, and passwords
- Use your address book to add friends to Spam Killer. Spam Killer will accept all email from friends.
- Set Spam Killer to open your email program when there is new mail
- Set Spam Killer to automatically update its filters.

Spam Killer does not work with AOL or web mail.

It costs \$40.

Some of My Favorite Software

PDF995

Many of you now receive this newsletter attached to an email. With this edition you may notice that it is in an Acrobat Reader (or PDF) format. This is something I've wanted to do for a while, but I could not justify the \$200+ purchase of the Acrobat program that does this. I stumbled upon PDF995 when I did a search on Google. WWW.PDF995.COM came up as a sponsored link there. PDF995 is a free download that allows documents to be "printed" into a PDF format. Each time a document is formatted in this manner an ad come up. For \$9.95, the ads can be turned off..

ADOBE ACROBAT READER FOR PALM OS

This enables me to view PDF files on my Palm device. This is handy if I have documents I might need to carry with me for reference.

PALMBASKET AND DESKTOP

This \$14.95 program has PC and Palm components that let you essentially make out shopping lists by selecting stored items. New items can be added as well along with prices for any item. This has been helpful to me in terms of time management. If I add items to the PalmBasket list as they appear on the paper list on our refrigerator, then I have a shot of picking up items as I happen to be passing by the store in my journeys rather than making a special trip later. The software has also been helpful for budget purposes.

PALM READER

This Palm program works in conjunction with electronic books which can be downloaded from Palm subsidiary Peanut Press. I read whatever book I have stored in my Palm whenever I have time to kill in a waiting room or anyplace else. In particular, I've been reading the original Tarzan books by Edgar Rice Burroughs which cost me a bout \$3 each

LVIEW PRO 2002

This is an update to a program I purchased quite a few years ago. It has some pretty sophisticated graphics handling capabilities that I haven't at all tapped into. I mainly use it because it is able to very quickly create slide shows from a variety of graphics formats.

OTHERS . . .

Many other of my favorite programs are listed at my web site. They include such titles as AnyTime Deluxe, Microsoft Publisher, Norton Antivirus, McAfee Spam Killer, Microsoft Trips and Streets, Paperport Deluxe, Microsoft Money, Virtual Drive, Iomega Quiksync, MemTurbo, and VersaCheck. If you are looking for some software capability that you do not presently have or to improve upon some current function, please call me for advice.

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