



Bug-Bytes

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

Vol. 2, Issue 5

May 2003

MANAGE YOUR INTERNET EXPLORER FAVORITES

HAVE YOU DISCOVERED THE CONVENIENCE OF BOOKMARKS?

For your
information



Internet Explorer provides the means for you to quickly return to your favorite web pages whenever you want to do so. The feature is called Favorites in Internet Explorer and Bookmarks in Netscape. Nevertheless, most people still call them bookmarks, just as we refer to “Kleenex” when we mean tissues. Hereafter, I’ll use the term bookmarks instead of favorites.

Bookmarks provide a visual history of links to your favorite web pages. When you save a bookmark, you create a link so that you can immediately return to that particular web site. The feature eliminates the need for you to look up that specific web address, and you do not have to retype every character of its long address (URL).

To save a bookmark, click on Favorites on the menu bar at the top of Internet Explorer, then on Add to Fa-

avorites. That’s all there is to it. Well, almost all there is to it.

To use the feature, click Favorites on the same menu bar (or on Bookmarks in Netscape). A drop-down menu lists all of your saved links. Scroll until you find the link you want. Double click on it to open it. Sort the data (click on the column heading) to toggle between ascending and descending views of the data.

Did you forget to save a favorite you really wanted, when you could? Depending on how many days of history you have authorized in Internet Explorer, (Tools, Options, Internet Options, History,) click on the History button. Navigate to that day, and then to the link that you want. Open the link and then save it as a bookmark.

Microsoft’s Favorites is designed in a

hierarchy. That is, the data is typically saved in one of many folders and subfolders to help simplify finding the data, and to reduce the number of choices shown on the screen at one time. The program offers a dialog to create and move folders, to rename them, and to delete them.

Given that the number of bookmarks can become very large, the use of folders is encouraged as a means to make the whole thing manageable. If you create and manage a small number of bookmarks, the system as designed is quite adequate. However, if you have a very large collection of bookmarks, the hierarchical approach is time consuming and difficult to use.

It is like the famous shell game. Under which shell is the pea (data link)? See the following software review for an effective alternative.

SHORT STUFF — LIST NAVIGATION TIPS AND TRICKS

Windows includes some neat built-in navigation shortcuts. Get familiar with the Home and End keys on your keyboard, and with the use of alphabetical or numeric characters when you want to jump to different positions in a long list. These tricks are useful in Windows Explorer, or while you are work-

ing in an e-mail list

Use the Home key to jump to the top of a column of information, and End key to jump to . . . the end of the column. This is helpful when you know what you are looking for is closer to one end of the column than the other.

Press an alphabetical key to jump to the first occurrence of that letter in the list, or use a number to jump to the first instance of that number in the list.

For the best results, sort your data alphabetically using the Windows “Detail” view. To select which view you

want, click on View, and then Detail. Then double click on the header at the top of the column.

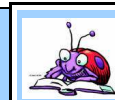
Note that each time you double click a

column header, the column toggles between ascending and descending views. In the case of the name column, the data is in alphabetical order. You

can also sort the data in other columns, as to size, type, date, or other data contained in the column.

SOFTWARE REVIEWS: KAYLON'S POWERMARKS™

GET THE BENEFITS OF KEYWORD SEARCHES FOR YOUR BOOKMARKS



Kaylon's *Powermarks* uses the power of keyword searching to locate your favorite bookmarks. The program jumps to your links without any scrolling, sorting, or drilling down through folders and subfolders.

Once you save a web address (URL) as a bookmark, the



program automatically saves the URL, name, keywords, and the description that it retrieved from the actual web page. You can add your own keywords to refine the search criteria and to group your link with related items, at a later time, that are meaningful to you

When you save links as Powermarks you are offered two options—one is automatic and the other is manual. Let's say that you want to save a link to a modem web site. You might add the keywords modem, V90, V92, 56K, tips, and troubleshooting. Then a search that includes any one of those terms will instantly bring up all the related items that

use any of those keywords. It is incredibly fast and easy.

From the www.kaylon.com/power.html web site, you can add a set of three Powermarks icons to your Internet Explorer toolbar. The first one opens Powermarks so you can enter your search keyword or keywords, i.e., modem. The second icon is used to automatically create a link. The third icon is used to manually create a link. That is, you review what the program offers and then modify it with any additions or corrections you may care to make. Note that you are only presented with information that fits your search criteria.

Powermarks has won a long series of "Editor's Choice" awards from computer magazines. Try it before you buy it for 30-days. The purchase price is \$24.95. If you are like me, you will never use anything but Powermarks. Then again, I have more than 800 bookmarks. What do you have?

WHAT ARE OTHER POWERMARKS BENEFITS?

- ★ Backup and synchronize bookmarks across multiple machines and browser types (IE, Netscape, Opera, NetCaptor, or Mozilla).
- ★ Store a copy of your settings in a secure on-line place.
- ★ Check for broken links for one or all of your bookmarks.
- ★ Easily convert your current Favorites or Bookmarks to Powermarks.
- ★ Print your bookmark list.
- ★ Export your bookmarks to popular formats.
- ★ Select what you want to see by-column

IS WHAT YOU SEE ALL THAT YOU CAN GET?



YOU CAN CUSTOMIZE COLUMNS IN WINDOWS ME, 2000, AND WINDOWS XP

In Windows Explorer, or when surfing My Computer, click on View, Choose Details, and select the columns you want to see, and the order in which you want to see them. Move selected items up or down to see them in the order you want them. You may want to pick different columns for photos or music than you do for textual data.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE FILE TRANSFER IDEAS

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO TRANSFER FILES



Let's look at some ways to transfer files between computers (yours or someone else's). Briefly, I'll cover transfers by "Sneaker net" (floppy, CD, DVD, ZIP disk, or by USB flash drive), by USB bridge/file transfer cable, over a network (LAN), and/or by e-mail.

For many years one of the most popular ways to transfer files between computers was by using a floppy disk. That method was called "sneaker net" since your sneakers walked the files between computers. It only worked for very small files (what you could save on a floppy disk). Today you can use the same method but with media that stores much more data (CD, DVD, ZIP disks and flash drives). It is still a form of sneaker net.

A newer and much more user friendly method is file transfers via a special USB cable called a data transfer or bridge cable. The six-foot long cable includes a special chip in the middle of the cable. It makes transferring files

possible, with split-screen software to select the files you want to transfer and where you want to send them. The cables come as either USB 1.1 or 2.0 cables.

The data transfer/bridge cables provide for transfer rates up to 480 megabits per second with a USB 2.0 cable or up to 12 megabits per second for a 1.1 cable. Actual transfer rates are usually much less than the theoretical rates.

You plug one end of the USB cable into a USB port on your host computer and the other end into a similar port on the remote computer, install the software, and start transferring files.

A new item is the USB flash drive. It is an extremely small drive that can be carried in your pocket, or maybe placed on a key chain like a rabbit's foot. Many new computers come with one or more USB ports on the front of the computer. Thus, it is easy to plug and unplug the flash drive and take it with you. (www.tigerdirect.com is one

source for the drive).

If your computers are networked, you can quickly transfer files between your computers (desktops and/or laptops) if file and printer sharing is supported by your operating system and enabled. Most home networked computers are connected at speeds greater than those available via a USB cable (up to 100Mbps). The files can be transferred over the distance supported by the network (much further than by USB cable).

The last method, e-mail, works with some serious limitations. Its success may depend on a number of factors beyond your control. For example, the recipients may restrict the size of files that they will accept and may block attachments. If they have a dial-up connection, that may make it impractical to send them large files. Still, it is another possible means to transfer files, (even to yourself) if you have more than one computer and it is on a network.

THE WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

www.Annoyances.org



Whether you use Windows 95, 98, ME, 2000, or XP, you may have things that annoy you about Windows. Check out www.annoyances.org and navigate to the articles section on the left side of the screen. You may find relief for some of the things that annoy you.

Here is a brief sampling of topics you may see there. First, be sure to go to

the bottom of the screen and customize the information for your version of the operating system. That way you will see only the things that apply to your computer and its operating system.

- ✓ Stop Windows from displaying the thumb nail cache.
- ✓ Enable or disable Automatic Windows Updates.

- ✓ Turn off or on CD autorun.
- ✓ Turn off the low disk space warning.
- ✓ Get rid of irritating splash screens.
- ✓ How do I stop programs running every time I start Windows?
- ✓ How do I get rid of the Windows login screen when I am the only user? (Networking tab)

The site also includes discussion fo-

rums for the various versions of the OS. Peruse the forum for ongoing discussions or start one of your own. You will also find useful information on the tabs labeled Customizing, Net-

working, Performance, Troubleshooting, Applications, and the other tabs.

Click on the Getting Started tab for

great information for beginners, and an interesting Windows Roadmap for comparisons of the various operating systems.

SOUND OFF)))))

BE IN CONTROL OF SOUND EVENTS ON YOUR COMPUTER



Sound can add a pleasant dimension to your computer enjoyment, or it can be an irritant. Fortunately, you can easily control the volume of sound and which sounds, if any, play for different computer events, i.e., Windows startup, exit, etc. You are in the driver's seat. Here are some ways that you can control your sound:

- Click on Start, Control Panel, Sounds, Volume. Set the volume sliders to where you want them. Check the box to add the playback control to your taskbar. In that way you can click on the icon on the taskbar to quickly modify your sound levels.
- Fine tune your bass and treble settings, and even the volume, using the controls on your speaker.
- If you do a lot with sound, you may like the convenience of a new keyboard that includes a volume control on the keyboard. Such keyboards are inexpensive and also include extra keys to access the Internet, My Computer, and may even include a calculator. Mine does.
- In the Control Panel, Sound menu, click on the Sounds tab and select

which if any sounds you want associated with various Windows events. The events are listed along with the sound associated with each event.

- You can create your own personalize sound scheme. (Save your choices to create your scheme.)

Be aware that the quality of sound your computer produces depends in large part on the quality of your speakers, and somewhat less on your sound card. That is to say, you will never realize the full potential of a medium or top-of-the-line sound card with tinny speakers.

If you have a Hi Fi for your records, you know how that works. You may already have a satisfactory set of speakers. Let your ears be the judge.

Speakers, and the sound cards that power them, are sold with funny numbers such as 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. The numbers indicate how many speakers are included in the setup. For instance, a 5.1 setup includes five speakers—two front speakers, a center speaker, two rear speakers, and a bass speaker (sub-woofer) to give 3-D surround sound effect. Again, let your ears, and your aesthetic senses tell you what is right for you. If you are limited for space by

your computer, and you don't play electronic games, two or three speakers may be all that you need or want.

If you play audio CDs, consider that as well if you plan to upgrade your sound system. Be sure to check to see if your computer will support the sound system that you want.

All computers come with a small built-in speaker. Its primary purpose is to issue a series of beeps as a means to identify any startup problems.

Your computer may already include a sound card, or a sound chip on your motherboard, and two or more speakers that sit on either side of your computer, or that are built into your monitor.

If you have a CD/DVD drive, you can listen (privately) to your favorites music using earphones. A cable connects between your sound card or motherboard with a sound chip. If you don't hear anything, be sure that "mute" is not engaged in your sound dialog and that the slider for CD is set at the level where you want it. With earphones, adjust the thumbwheel on the front of your CD/DVD drive.