



BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

VOL. 4, ISSUE 06

JUNE 2005

SHOP THE INTERNET

USE THE POWER OF THE INTERNET TO SAVE YOU MONEY



Americans have long been accustomed to buying merchandise by mail from glossy vendor catalogs. The Internet adds a new level of convenience to shopping with a wide range of smart choices. You still shop from the comfort of your own home and have the merchandise delivered to your door.

Catalogs tend to favor just one source for the selection of goods although different brands may be offered. The Internet offers selections from competing vendors with many more items from which to pick, with comparative prices and a wealth of product reviews and buying suggestions.

Careful shoppers can save time and money via the Internet. You soon learn those exact same items will be offered for sale at vastly different prices. It is still "buyers beware" out there.

IS IT SAFE?

Generally, the answer is "yes." However, the same rules apply to shopping on the Internet as they do for dealing with local stores, or from catalogs.

- Deal with reputable firms
- Know what you want to buy before you place your order
- Know the value of what you want to purchase
- Know whether you are buying the latest model or an obsolete model.

- Compare terms and prices so there are no surprises
- Know the vendor's return policy
- Look for free shipping where possible
- Allow for the cost of shipping in your cost calculations
- Note how long it will take for your shipment to arrive. Plan accordingly.
- Make arrangements on how to receive the shipment if you are not going to be home
- Place your order
- Enjoy your new purchase when it arrives

SOFTWARE REVIEW: TWO SCREENSAVERS

Modern screensavers can add a bit of fun to your computing. They are entertaining. They replace your static desktop with interesting animations, colorful graphics, or rotating photo collections, whenever your computer is idle for the minimum number of minutes set in Display Properties, Screensaver.

Click on this link to find a good discussion of how screensavers work.

<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/screensaver1.htm>

Briefly, screensavers are just executable files with an SCR file extension (EXE is changed to SCR). There are lots of different screensavers, but virtual aquariums are perhaps among the most popular ones.

Be sure that your computer meets the minimum requirements to run these 3D beauties. Both products run on Windows 98 through Windows XP.

SERENESCREEN AQUARIUM (www.serenescreen.com) is perhaps the most realistic aquarium screen saver program around.



The coral in the aquarium is so real you will feel as though you can reach out and touch its texture. As for the fish, people seeing your screen saver for the first time might well think that your screen is a real aquarium masking as a computer monitor. The fish swim and turn just as real fish do.

You control the number and kinds of fish, lighting, and sound. Download a

free demo copy to try the program. Buy it for \$19.95 as a download.

WATER LIFE



Water life, by Rixane International takes a different approach to 3D screensavers. Water Life mimics the view a scuba diver might have in the ocean. You control the number of fish, how fast they swim, and select one of three ocean environments for lighting and color.

Move your mouse and the view moves in that direction. It is a virtual reality show. Add or subtract undersea plants and sunken objects. Try it free for 30 days at www.rixane.com or buy it for \$17.95.

The fish do not turn as smoothly nor as realistically as they do in Aquarium, nor are the colors as bright and vibrant. However, from my one memory of scuba diving and snorkeling in the Caribbean, the views and shadings are very realistic.

The main difference between Aquarium and Water Life is that you are looking at the broader views in the ocean rather than the confined space of an aquarium. Try either of these programs before you buy.

NETWORKING - PART TWO

SETUP PRINTER AND FILE SHARING. Once you have your network installed and up and running, you need to decide

which folders you want to share and whether or not you want to share a printer.

By default, Windows (XP) automatically creates a folder called **Shared Documents**. You can drag and drop files to that folder to share with the other computers on your network. However, in the long run it is probably best to set up sharing for specific folders so that you don't have to keep moving files around or copying them from place to place. For instance, you might want to share a photo folder, a data folder, and a music folder.

To share any folder, click on My Computer, select a drive and select the particular folder. Right click on the folder you want to share and select Sharing and Security; Share this folder on the network. See the screenshot. Allow or disallow others to change files in the shared folders.

Give your shared folder a name that you will remember. **Windows won't allow sharing unless you authorize it.**

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF A FOLDER IS SET FOR SHARING? The folder icon shows a hand holding the icon to indicate sharing.

SHARE A PRINTER. Being able to share a printer is one of the joys of networking. With networked computers you can print from a laptop or from a desk computer, from different rooms in your house.

To share a printer from the computer to which your printer is attached, open the printer dialog. Start, Control Panel, Printers and Fax. Right click on the default printer, and select share.

FIREWALL NICETIES. Configure your firewall to allow sharing folders with other computers on your network. Be sure that you are using only ONE firewall. Note, the notice at the bot-

tom of the screenshot for Windows XP. In that example, I use Trend Micro PC-Cillin which is a firewall and anti-virus product. Thus, I have Windows XP's firewall disabled.

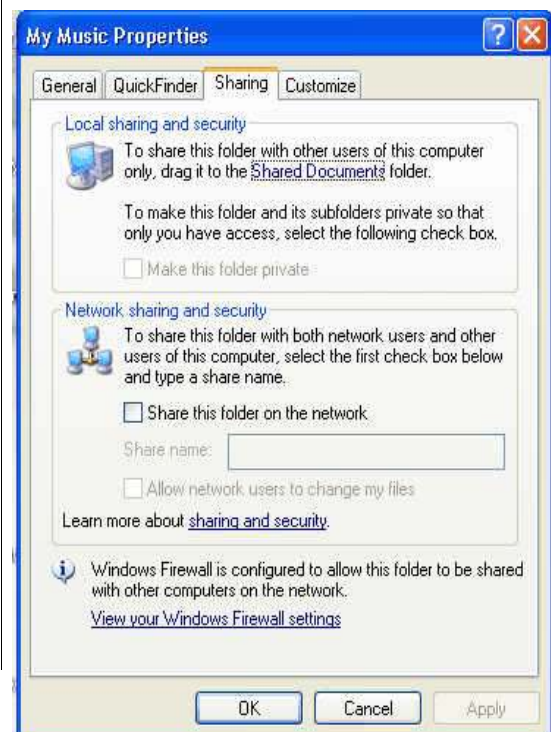
THE ABC'S OF NETWORKING

A little advance reading can save you a lot of aggravation later. Read to understand the networking options and how they apply to you and your particular computer setup. Will your network be wired or wireless? Will it be an ad hoc network between two closely spaced computers without a router, or will it require a router or access point?

Read the network information provided by Windows XP help. It is a good starting point and includes diagrams to help you understand networking and what hardware you will need.

Carefully read the instructions that come with your network hardware. Don't miss any steps or skip steps unless advised to do so in the instructions.

Enjoy your new network. You earned it!



SOFTWARE REVIEW: ASHAMPOO BURNER

SUITE 5

Are you looking for a less expensive CD/DVD burning solution than the bundles offered by Nero or Roxio? Both Nero and Roxio offer full featured media products that may include many options than you will never use or want (movie editing, photo editing, label creation, etc.)

Enter Shampoo's Burner Suite 5 which handles CDs and DVDs, or Suite 4 which burns CDs but does not include DVD burning capability.

I learned of this software from a RASCAL member and decided to give it a try (Suite 5).

Whereas Nero 6.0 or Roxio 7.5 cost in the neighborhood of \$80, Ashampoo's products cost \$29.99 for Suite 5, and \$24.99 for Suite 4.

Suite 5 boasts that it is the fastest (and easiest) way to burn and copy data, video and audio CDs and DVDs.

Shampoo says "In the great tradition of Ashampoo software, this CD/DVD burning application makes it really easy to create & copy your own data, video, audio and multisession CDs and DVDs.

"Many current CD/DVD burning programs are universal 'everything including the kitchen sink' applications that are overloaded with countless confusing functions. Ashampoo Burning Studio 5 makes life easier by concentrating on what you really want to do!

"No more screens full of complicated settings! No more hair-tearing trying to guess your way through the labyrinth of your burner program! Just drag your

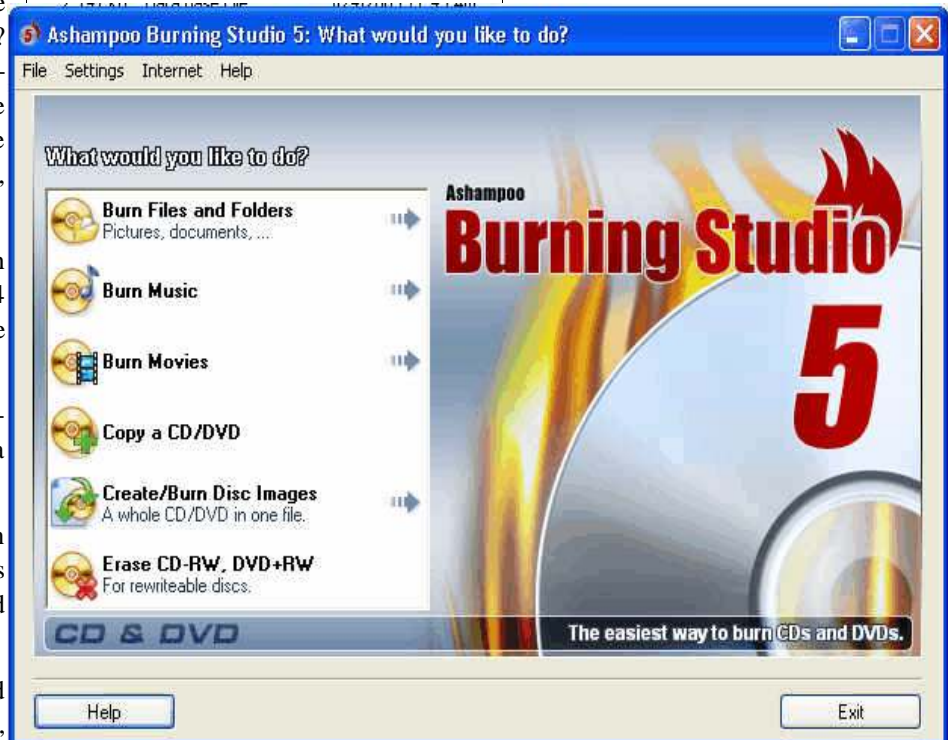
files into the program and burn your data or audio cd!

"With Ashampoo Burning Studio 5 you can save your music and data files to CD or DVD with just a couple of mouse clicks! In fact, it's so easy that it's even fun!

"Burns WAV, MP3, FLAC, WMA and Ogg Vorbis files directly to Audio CDs without any plugins

"Create CD and DVD copies from audio, video or data CDs/DVDs easily

"Integrated support for more than 1,500 CD and DVD burners



"Create MP3 CDs/DVDs

"Burn Movies as Video DVD, Video CD (VCD) or Super Video CD (S-VCD)

"Create and burn CD/DVD Images

"Load and save project files

"Erase CD-RWs / DVD+RWs / DVD-RWs

"Drag&Drop functions for adding files directly from the Windows® Explorer

"Supports file names with up to 127 characters for DVDs and 64 characters for CDs

"Burn speed and other options can all be set automatically

... and much more!

"Ashampoo Burning Studio 5 also helps you to save money on CD/DVD blanks. Since it produces "multisession" CDs/DVDs you can always add more files later provided the disc isn't completely full. This feature makes Ashampoo Burning Studio 5 ideal for everyone who needs to make occasional backups of important data!

"More than 1,700 CD and DVD writers are supported."

Is it hype or for real? I believe you will find it is for real. Try it and buy it from <http://www.ashampoo.com/>.

VIEW E-MAIL IN PLAIN TEXT OR IN RICH TEXT (HTML)

Outlook Express offers the option of sending and viewing e-mail messages in plain text (human readable letters and numbers without any embedded information), or in Rich Text format (HTML) that may contain hyperlinks, font information, special formatting, and images.

The Rich Text option offers many advantages over plain text. Chief among them is the ability to include photos and graphics in e-mail messages. Another important advantage is control over the formatting of e-mail messages. Still another advantage is that you can include links to Internet information. Those who receive the links do not have to cut and paste them into Internet Explorer to open the links. Instead, they just double click on the links (underlined hyperlink) and the link opens.

The first screenshot shows that you can reply to a message in Rich Text or in Plain text. Notice the option to send pictures with messages at the bottom of the format dialog box. You can check or uncheck that option, but I always leave it on.

The second screenshot shows the options available under Tools, Options, Send. Note the Mail Sending Format options about two thirds of the way down the dialog box. Just above Mail Sending Format is an option to reply to messages in the format in which they were sent.

The third and last screenshot shows the font, numeric, formatting, and indenting options that are available with the formatting bar.

