



# Bug-Bytes

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

VOL. 3, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2004

## GET A RETURN RECEIPT FOR YOUR E-MAIL

LEARN HOW TO TURN OFF AND ON THE E-MAIL READ RECEIPT OPTION



**H**ave you ever wanted to get an acknowledgment that a particular e-mail message was received? Outlook Express includes an option to do just that. You access it by opening Outlook Express and clicking on Tools, Options, Receipts.

In general, most of us do not want a read receipt for every message we send, nor do we want to annoy recipients by requiring them to acknowl-

edge every message they get from us. However, there may be times when we want to know if and when a message was received. To do so, before you send the message for which you want a mail receipt, click on the "Request a read receipt for all sent messages." After you've sent the message, go back to the Receipts tab and uncheck that option.

Note that you can customize how return read receipts are processed. In Windows XP the options for that are:

- Never send a read receipt
- Notify me for each read receipt request
- Always send a read receipt (with a further option "unless it is sent to a mailing list and your name is not on the To: or Cc: line of the message).

## SOFTWARE REVIEWS: SMALL PROGRAMS AND LARGE RETURNS

TIDYMAIL AND QUICK REPLY



This month we look at two very small very inexpensive programs that meet very specialized user needs. Both programs provide elegant solutions for common computer problems.

### TIDYMAIL

*TidyMail* is designed exclusively for Outlook Express ([user.cavenet.com/jerrya/TidyMail/](http://user.cavenet.com/jerrya/TidyMail/)). It provides a quick and easy way to forward or reply to messages without including lengthy To: and From: headers and quote characters (the :, |, or > characters). Install the program, click on reply or forward in Outlook Express, and click on the *TidyMail* icon that is installed in the quick launch area of your taskbar. The program immediately strips out the excess characters leaving you with a clean message. Unlike similar programs,

you don't have to cut and pasting text, and the program removes the superfluous headers as well as the quote characters.

The software addresses the problem of cleaning up forwarded messages that we want to share with others, but without all of the unnecessary garbage that makes a simple message very tedious to read.

The program is designed by a software writer in Cave Junction, Jerry Airaudi. If you wish, try the program for free for up to 25 messages, or purchase it for \$7.50. I use it daily and think it is a bargain. Use the following line to

order or to try the software. Support local software developers.

### QUICK REPLY

*Quick Reply* 2.07 is designed to do one thing and do it well—to help you insert customized greetings and salutations, and specialized signatures. It is a boon for anyone who needs to customize their signature line for messages based up which hat they are currently wearing. You may have a message you use strictly for computer club business, one for your hobbies, some for your business, and some you use repeatedly for other purposes.

The program lets you create folders, announcements, custom replies, and to create macros or hot keys to insert those phrases in your e-mail messages. If you have a lot of repetitive tasks, this can be a real time saver. You can customize the font style, size, color and text alignment. One of the replies I created is a statement about how to

handle an error message in Adobe Reader. Use either hot-keys that you assign or a drop-down menu to insert the messages of your choice.

The software is written by Erstenware (<http://www.erstenware.com>). They have some interesting e-mail related

programs. Try this product before you buy it with a 15-day trial or buy it for \$19.95 less a 15% discount for club members. The discount coupon code is 975409875108.

[http://www.erstenware.com/quick\\_reply/discount.html](http://www.erstenware.com/quick_reply/discount.html)



## HOW TO RESIZE DIGITAL PHOTOS

Resize photos for use in e-mail

Let's explore some of the many ways that you can resize your digital photos. Most digital photos are much too large to send in an e-mail in their native size. If you send them without resizing them they take a very long time to download and your recipients have to do a lot of scrolling to view your photos. A good size for photos included in e-mail is 320 x 240 pixels (4.4 x 3.3 inches) or 640 x 480. To convert pixels to inches divide by 72. Check to see which digital-size setting you use in your digital camera. The actual size of the recorded image may be less if you have digital zoom enabled due to some trimming. I leave digital zoom off. (It is a software extrapolation that degrades image quality to artificially extend the zoom power of a camera).

### WINDOWS XP: SEND TO MAIL RECIPIENT

Windows XP includes a nifty built-in tool to resize photos. Use Windows Explorer to find the photo you want to include in an e-mail. Right click on it and select Sent To Mail Recipient from the drop-down dialog box. Select "Make it smaller." The first time you do this, click on the "Show More Options" at the bottom of the dialog box and

select "Small" (640x480) as the default size for photos. Thereafter, whenever you use the resize tool and select "Make it smaller" it will insert your photos in e-mail messages in the 640x480 size. The strong point for this tool is that it easily resizes any photo to the default you selected and attaches it to a blank e-mail message waiting for you to enter the address and your message.

### OUTLOOK EXPRESS: INSERT PHOTOS AS ATTACHMENTS

Start a new e-mail message, click on Insert (from a tool bar or menu bar) and a full-sized photo is inserted into your e-mail message at the point where you last clicked on the message with your cursor. Resize the photo by grabbing a corner and moving it diagonally in a straight line. Alternatively, click on a side and move it inward. However, that changes the aspect of the photo. Therefore, you have to move the adjacent side to try to restore the correct aspect ratio. If you don't, your photo will be either fatter or skinnier than your original photo.



## TOO MANY COOKS SPOIL THE STEW

DON'T DOUBLE-UP ON RESIDENT PROGRAMS

Don't use more than one each of **resident** programs for your firewall/anti-virus/ad blocker/ and spam filter. If you double-up on programs meant for the same purpose they compete with one another, gobble up available memory, and can produce some strange results including system slow down. I'm referring to programs that start up and stay resident in memory every time you start your computer. It is okay and even desirable to manually run more than one

ad-ware and spyware program to keep your computer free of these pests.

Let's look at one scenario. For example, I have Windows XP, ZoneAlarm (firewall), Norton AntiVirus, AND I have a third-party spam filter (SpamSubtract). In their attempt to help us prevent virus damage and to overcome pop-ups, banners, and to control cookies, we are now faced with

potential conflicts caused by software products attempting to simultaneously do many of the same things.

Here are some examples. Windows XP offers to block some or all cookies (Tools, Internet Options, Privacy) and includes a limited firewall (Start, Control Panel, Network Connection, Local Area Connection Properties, Advance). Windows XP's cookie control (if enabled) would conflict with AdSubtract, and the XP firewall would interfere with the much more capable ZoneAlarm firewall.

The latest version of ZoneAlarm includes built-in Anti-

virus monitoring, inbound file attachment protection, and outbound e-mail protection. It also includes cookie control and ad pop-up and banner suppression. See the problem? I have turned off cookie monitoring in XP and I use ZoneAlarm for my firewall rather than XP's built-in firewall.

Similarly, I turn off the e-mail protection in ZoneAlarm because Norton SystemWorks performs those functions for me. I don't want two programs to fight over that function producing conflicts.

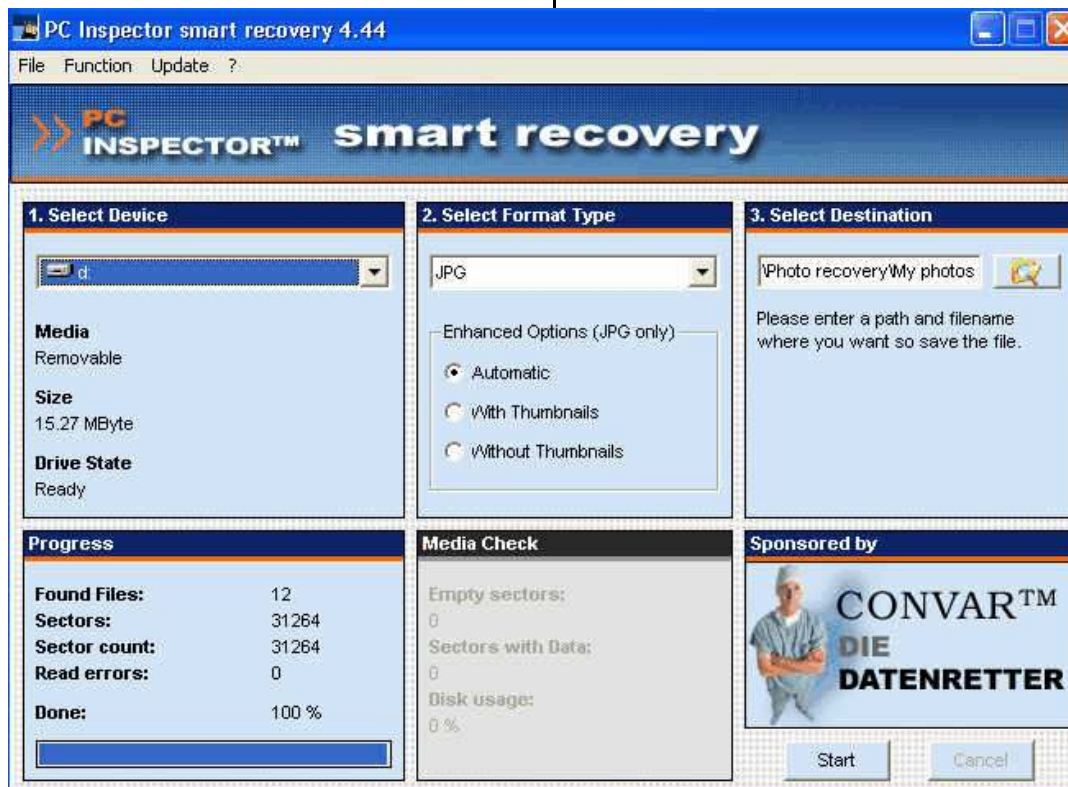
RECOVER DELETED PHOTOS FROM DIGITAL FILM  
THEY MAY NOT BE LOST FOREVER



While we should all make a copy of photos before we edit them (to preserve the original photos) that doesn't always happen. If you deleted photos you need on your digital camera film, recover them with *PC Inspector Smart Recovery*. This is a free product of the German firm Convar. Download a copy of the program from one of the following web sites:

[http://www.pcinspector.de/smart\\_media\\_recovery/uk/welcome.htm](http://www.pcinspector.de/smart_media_recovery/uk/welcome.htm)  
[www.pcworld.com/downloads/file\\_description/0.fid,23202,00.asp](http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0.fid,23202,00.asp)  
<http://www.snapfiles.com/get/smartrecovery.html>

This is the way it works. Insert your digital film in your film reader. Start *PC Inspector Smart Recovery* and tell the program what name you want to use for the recovered files and where you want to save them. Select the device and the format of your photos. Click start and the program scans your digital film, recovers the photos, and places a copy of each photo in the folder that you specified. I suggest that you create a folder especially for that purpose. Here is a screenshot of the software with a 16MB chip.



## HOW TO SPOT AN E-MAIL HOAX OR URBAN LEGEND

DON'T PASS ON A HOAX OR URBAN LEGEND MESSAGES



As computer a user it is easy to believe that **everything** we see on our computer is genuine, accurate, and the absolute truth. Alas, that is not necessarily so.

The onus is on YOU to question everything you see. Your computer is just a very efficient device for disseminating information; that information may be true or false. You do not want to be guilty of sending hoaxes to a long list of your friends. That is not a very friendly thing to do and it certainly won't endear you to them. Doing so will make you look like a rube.

Verify the truthfulness of extravagant claims BEFORE you forward any of them to anyone. I'll show you how to do that later in this article.



There are many hoaxes sent via e-mail to unsuspecting and trusting friends. Here are some clues that a message may be and probably is a hoax. It is bad enough that your "friend" sent the hoax to you in the first place. It is infinitely worse if you forward it to someone else.

### SIGNS OF A HOAX

- The writer makes outrageous claims that are very unlikely and often highly inflammatory. If it sounds as if it is too good to be true, or it is highly unlikely, then it is probably a hoax. For instance, the message many say that if you click on a particular link, Microsoft (or a similar

entity) will donate a dollar for every click they receive to a charity or for some other worthwhile purpose; that you will be given the secret to a popular commercial recipe such as Mrs. Field's cookies, or that a new virus will totally erase your hard drive and destroy all of your hardware. They might as well say that all of your hair will fall out and that you will get warts, and your car will start to run roughly.

- Other popular hoaxes ask you to boycott companies because of some imaginary oversight or action on their part. Some of these hoaxes are reissued from time to time and only the product in the message changes. They are not only untrue but they are very malicious as well. Some examples include the gasoline boycott and false claims made about Pepsi and Dr. Pepper.
- A very good sign of a hoax is a request for you to "forward this letter to everyone you know." That is seldom a good idea. That is what the hoax writer wants you to do. It clogs up e-mail servers, damages reputations, and in the case where you erase files, it can adversely affect your computer. See the next item.
- It is almost a guaranteed hoax if the e-mail message asks you to delete a specific Windows file to prevent a virus. Invariably the file that they ask you to delete is needed by Windows (for example SULFNBK.EXE and JDBGMGR.EXE hoaxes)

Good citizens don't circulate chain letters nor engage in spurious invest-

ment schemes, and they don't circulate hoaxes. Similarly, good citizens do not circulate urban legends. Urban legends are stories that are widely believed but that are false, such as the story about modern rail gauges being derived from Roman carriage days.

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF A MESSAGE YOU RECEIVE IS A HOAX OR URBAN LEGEND?

The easiest way is to paste a key phrase into your search engine as a test or to use one of the following web sites to test the validity of the information. The message could be about a supposed virus, or a statement of fact. Go to one or more of the sites listed to get a feel for the numbers and kinds of hoaxes. I suggest that you bookmark these links, or others that you have found so that you can quickly return to them when and not if you receive questionable material.

### BOOKMARK THESE WEB SITES

<http://www.truthorfiction.com/>  
<http://www.urbanlegends.com/>  
<http://www.snopes.com/>  
<http://hoaxbusters.ciac.org/>  
<http://www.vmyths.com/>  
<http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/vinfodb.html>  
<http://www.mcafee.com/anti-virus/>

Lastly, buy and use a good anti-virus program. Leave it turned on and set it to automatically download virus signature updates. That way it will quarantine or remove any true viruses or worms that it encounters. It is too late to learn about a new virus or worm from one of your friends.