

# BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

VOL. 4, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2005

## HOW TO FAX

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO GET THE JOB DONE

Most of you are familiar with fax machines and have used them to send documents. They are a familiar sight in offices and in mail/copy centers.

Manufacturers design fax machines to scan pages of documents and then to send them over telephone lines. Transmission speeds are very slow. The recipients often receive the faxes with a similar fax device. Nevertheless, there are other ways to accomplish the same thing, without owning a dedicated fax machine.

- Scan a document with a scanner, or with a multifunction printer with a scanning mode, and **send the document via e-mail**. No telephone wires are involved.

- Send previously scanned or created documents **via a fax modem** using phone wiring. The fax modem converts the document into a language understood by computers. For instance, a fax modem automatically wakes up when they are transmitting machine language over the phone line and converts the signals into an image of the original document.
- A fax modem serves as a data transmission device (voice and data), and a fax device. Check to see if your modem supports a fax mode. Click Start, Control Panel, Phone and Modem Options. Check that a working phone line is connecting from a phone wall jack to the LINE connector on your modem. The modem acts as a switch. Connect your phone to the second connector on the modem. It has a symbol that looks like radio waves or says "Phone."
- Use the Windows XP fax print

driver (send only). Windows XP has a built-in Fax wizard. It creates a fax print driver. When you want to send a fax to someone with a fax machine or fax modem via your phone line, you print the document to the fax driver. It acts just as if you were sending the document to a printer. Instead, it converts the written document into machine language (that strange squeal you hear if you inadvertently pick up your phone while data is being transmitted).

### HOW TO SETUP FAX CAPABILITY IN WINDOWS XP

Click, Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs, Add Windows Components (on the left sidebar), click the Fax Services check box, and click Next. Follow the onscreen directions.

### HOW TO FAX USING WINDOWS XP

Once you have the fax service installed, click on Start, All Programs, Accessories, Communications, Fax.

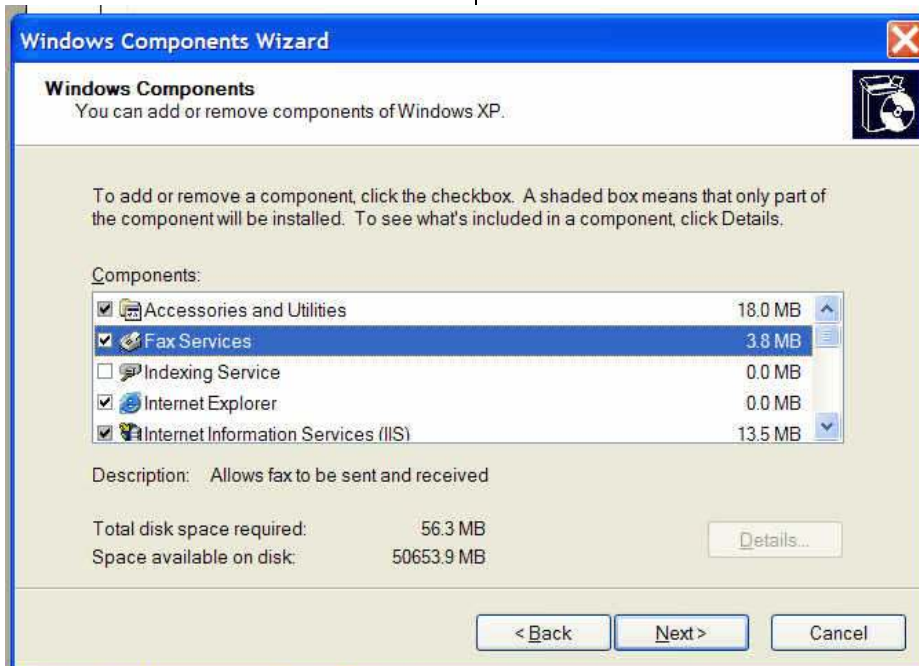
Click on Fax Console, Tools, Configure Fax and configure the fax for the first time. Enter the phone number of the telephone line that you will use for the fax. **Follow this format or it won't work.** +1 (541) xxx-xxxx (substitute the correct numbers for the x.

### SENDER INFORMATION

Fill in your name or business name and the fax number in the format shown above. The other information is optional.

### SELECT DEVICE FOR SENDING AND RECEIVING FAXES

Select your modem, the correct one if you have more than one modem, i.e., a fax modem. Set send and receive options, whether you want to receive faxes automatically or manually, and whenever a notice pops up on your computer. Specify where the output



will go under **Routing Options**. That is directly to your printer, to a saved file, or displayed on your screen.

#### TRANSMITTING SUBSCRIBER IDENTIFICATION (TSID) AND CALL SUBSCRIBER ID (CSID)

Furnish your fax number and business name or a personal name in the TSID field and the fax number and name for the party you are calling. Some special faxing software depends on that information. That information will let parties on the receiving know who sent the fax and to whom the fax was sent.

#### SELECT A COVER PAGE

Include a cover if you are sending a fax to a corporation. It enables those at the other end to get your fax to the correct person for a response. Otherwise, don't bother with a cover page. It just takes longer to send and to receive.

## HOAXES, REVISITED

ALL E-MAIL IS NOT TRUE

#### CHECK FOR HOAXES

We all receive e-mail messages from time to time from well-meaning friends who encourage us to **READ THIS E-MAIL**, and to forward the message immediately to everyone we know. Hoaxes come in the guise of political and religious stories, sometimes with a small grain of truth, but the rest with giant distortions or outright misrepresentations.

They come asking you to boycott products or manufacturers, or promise you huge sums of money if you will just click a link and then send the message to ten or more people in your address book. They come as chain letters.

First, as knowledgeable *Computerbugs* I believe we owe it to our friends to check first before we send questionable e-mails. How to do it: Cut and paste a line from the message into the Google search box that captures the

essence of the message, for instance "Microsoft will pay you \$245.00 For every person that you sent it [the message] to that forwards it on." Look for references to the message from hoax busting web sites such as [www.truthorfiction.com](http://www.truthorfiction.com) and [www.urbanlegends.com](http://www.urbanlegends.com). There are other good sites as well.

Secondly, if the e-mail passes the hoax/myth checking phase, delete all of the extraneous headers from the forwarded message leaving just the message. This step is especially important for messages that were forwarded umpteen times, each time with the lists of people to whom they sent that message.

Your recipients will silently appreciate that you thought enough of them to remove all of the worthless chaff before sending them the wheat. Your failure to do that requires additional time to send and receive those messages, and increases the file sizes of e-mails stored on your computer and on your recipient's computers.

#### NESTED MESSAGES WITH ATTACHMENTS

If you want to forward a message with nested attachments (where you have to click multiple times on the attachment link to finally get the attachment to finally open), drill down to the original message. From there, and only there, click the Forward button, add your addressee's e-mail address and a subject, and delete the headers and list of addressees from the forwarded message. That will save you from having to clean up all of the junk from the many forwarded messages nested above the original message.

#### TO FORWARD TO A DISTRIBUTION LIST

To forward a message to a distribution list, send the message to yourself on the To: line, and insert the distribution list name, or the e-mail addresses of each person to whom you want to receive the message, in the blind carbon copy field (Bcc:). If you don't see the Bcc: field, click on View, All Headers to turn on that feature.

#### CREATE A DISTRIBUTION LIST

In Outlook Express, open the address book. Click New, New Group, and name your group's distribution list: Examples might be, "Neighbors," "Animal Lovers," "Family," etcetera. Then add the names of the people that you want included in those lists. If you periodically send stuff to the same groups of people, distribution lists are a big time saver. Protect your list of recipients by not disclosing their e-mail addresses. Use the Bcc field.

## WHAT ARE FUNCTION KEYS?

### POWER TO THE KEYBOARD

PC keyboards include 12 function keys at the top of the keyboard. Manufacturers arrange the keys in three groups of four-keys. They are sometimes called "F-keys." The keys are labeled F1 through F12.

Manufacturers standardize the functions from keyboard to keyboard. The function keys are preprogrammed by the manufacturer to act in certain ways when pressed alone or in combination with the shift, alt, or ctrl keys.

Keep the following short list handy to help you learn and to use some of these handy shortcut keys.

F1 = Help

F3 = Search for a file or folder

Alt-F4 = Close active item, or quit program

Ctrl-F4 = Close active document in programs that allow you to have multiple documents open

F5 = Refresh the active window

F6 = Cycle through screen elements in a window or on the desktop

Shift-F10 = Display the shortcut menu for the selected item

## HOW-TO TIPS FOR IRFANVIEW

CREATE SLIDE SHOWS AND CONVERT FILES



Irfanview is a free file viewer, simple photo editor, and file converter. Get it at <http://www.irfanview.com/>. The current version is 3.97.

Irfanview is a good place to start when you do not have a photo editing program. Experiment with it at your leisure to get a feel for what you can do with photos stored on your computer.

### SLIDESHOW MODULE

One eye-popping feature is its slideshow module. Open Irfanview, click on File, Slideshow. Navigate to the folder that contains the photos that you want to view in the slideshow mode. You'll see a menu that looks like the screenshot below. The screenshot shows that I'm looking in my Computerbugs directory and that I have selected six files to view. Select one photo at a time by highlighting the file and clicking on the add button, or add all of the files in that particular directory.

Once you have selected the photos that you want to view, click on Play. To manually advance from slide to slide, press the spacebar. Note that I selected Automatic after mouse/keyboard input in the Options section of the slideshow menu.

Experiment with the options to display your photos as you want them.

Irfanview displays your photos full-screen. It is like watching a TV show on your television.

### TO VIEW ONE PHOTO AT A TIME

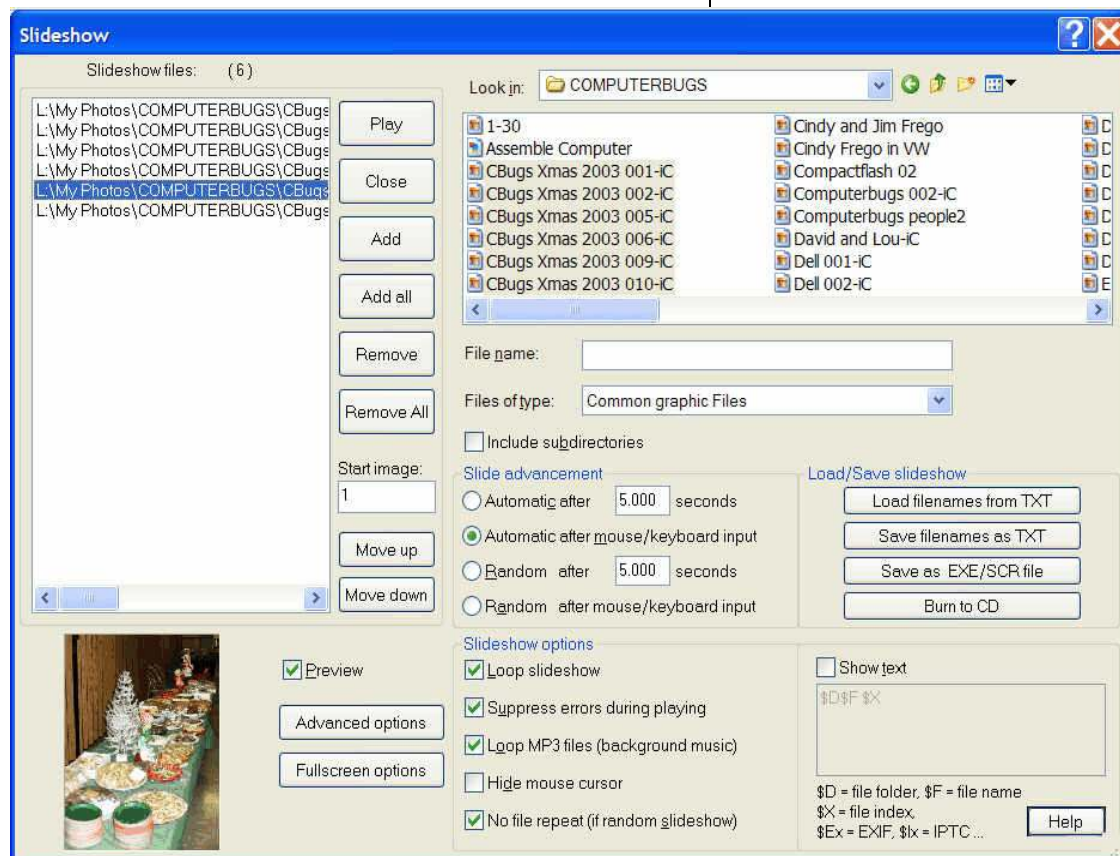
In Windows XP, make Irfanview or Windows Picture and Fax Viewer your default viewer. Right-click on a photo, and select open with and pick the program you want to use.

Then double-click on a photo. In either program, use the back and forward arrows on your keyboard to move from picture to picture. Use the arrows shown in Picture and Fax Viewer.

### SAVE YOUR SLIDESHOW

When your slideshow is just as you want it, save it to share with others (save as an EXE file). EXE stands for executable. That is, the person receiving your file just clicks on the filename with the EXE extension to open your slideshow.

Note that you can burn your show to a CD if your computer has a CD burner.



### CONVERT OLD-STYLE GRAPHICS FILES TO A NEWER FORMAT

Use the batch processing mode to convert older graphic files, such as those with the PCX extension to GIF or JPG files that Windows will display in thumbnails.

Click on File, Batch Conversion, and select the folder and files that you want to convert. The dialog for the converter looks very much like the slide show dialog. You select the files to convert, and select an output format. Click Start, and the program does the rest for you.

## Computer upgrade limited?

WORKAROUND SOLUTIONS MAY BE AVAILABLE

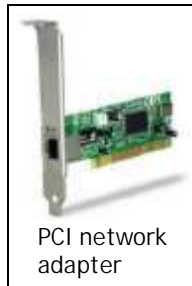
Is your computer out of available slots or ports for a new peripheral that you want to add? For instance, perhaps you want to add a network adapter to network your computer, or you want to add a card to capture and record TV shows. Maybe you want to use a wireless mouse or keyboard that use a USB connector, or provide a permanent connection for a digital film reader.



White USB connectors



USB ports



PCI network adapter



USB A and B connectors

If all of your PCI slots are full on your motherboard, you can probably buy a new PCI peripheral that combines multiple functions on a single board, or buy a USB version of the peripheral that you want.

If all of your USB ports (front and back of your computer) are filled, you can add a hub with additional ports, or add an internal PCI card that includes additional USB ports. Hubs generally come in four and seven port models. The hub connects to one of your existing USB ports, and is usually powered by an external power supply.

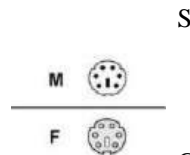


USB hub

Older computers, and low-end computers, may come with only two USB ports. Newer computers, and high-end computers may come with four to eight USB connectors.

If you are adding USB capacity, buy version 2.0 peripherals to get a faster throughput (up to 480 Megabits per second versus 12 Mbps) rather than version 1.0 or 1.1 hardware. Version 1.1 is fine for a keyboard or mouse. Version 2.0 is better for graphic capture, digital cameras, and printers.

Gender adapters are available to connect USB cables to PS2-style connectors (a green mouse connector, purple a keyboard connector) on the back of your computer.



Gender adapters are also available



to convert old style printer cables to USB.

See <http://www.cablestogo.com>, click on Gender Changers to view the many types of gender changers, including serial and parallel cable connectors.

See <http://www.pricegrabber.com> for price comparisons.

See <http://www.usb.org/home> for official technical information about USB.

## HAPPY HOLIDAY MAILING



HELP THE POST OFFICE

At our November meeting a discussion came up about what the US Postal Services needs to help them deliver your mail. Thanks to **Deverne Jacobson** for this quote from the Postal Service guidelines (USPS publication 28).

Address envelopes or "tailpieces" as follows:

- Use a simple sans serif type with uniform stroke thickness.
- (Common examples are Arial, Gil Sans, Futura, Helvetica, Tahoma, and Verdana).
- Type of machine-print in dark ink on a light background with a uniform left margin
- Left-justify every line in the address block
- Use two-letter state abbreviations
- Use one space between city and state and two spaces between Zip+four Code. Use appropriate Zip+four Codes (if unknown, use 5-digit Code)

AaBbCc

Sans serif font style

AaBbCc

Serif style-serifs in red