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From the Chair – Ian Campbell

It is now nearly a month since the launch of Windows 7 and it seems to be going smoothly. There are very few reports on the overseas blogs or websites of problems encountered. The question is should you upgrade?

First consideration is the cost in dollars and time. If you have either Windows XP or Windows Vista then you can use the upgrade program rather than the version for new computers. For most of us the version that will be most suitable will be Home Premium and this retails for \$249 in many shops but Seniornet members can purchase it for \$220 from the Seniornet Website. There are reports of prices as low as \$180 if you search the web. If you have Windows Vista now the upgrade process is very straightforward but could take several hours depending on the complexity of your computer. However if you Windows XP then you have to make a copy of all your data, photos etc, install Windows 7 and all your programs from the original disks (if you can find them?) and then restore your data. This process could take a day or more.

The second consideration is what do get for your time and money. Microsoft maintains that Windows 7 is more robust and secure than previous versions and uses less computer resources than Windows Vista, there is no reason to doubt these claims are true. I believe Windows 7 is easier to use in small ways but there are no dramatic differences in how it works. One nice feature is the introduction of Libraries, where all your material related to one topic can be linked to one library folder whether it be photos, newsletters, or other documents. Using libraries does not move any folders on your computer it just provides another view of them. Microsoft has kept Windows 7 smaller and simpler by dropping some ancillary programs but making them freely available on the Web. The one that is most likely to affect you is email. Outlook Express has been replaced by Windows Live Mail and is only available by download.

Overall if you have Vista and a broadband connection then upgrading is simple and probably worth doing but if you have XP or use email and are on dial up it may not be. Note that there is no requirement to upgrade and your current system will continue to work quite happily for years to come if you want it to.

The year is drawing to close and we will not be starting any new courses until February next year, however we will continue the Tuesday and Friday afternoon sessions where you can get your questions answered except for the main holiday period, more on the dates next month.

The Monthly Meeting

Looking back through the list of speakers at our monthly meetings we see that the guest speaker in July 2006 was Ernie Newman, the CEO of TUANZ (Telecommunication Users Association New Zealand) and at that time he told us about the need to improve broadband services in New Zealand. Ernie was back for our October meeting to give another presentation and this time he was able to tell us that broadband services will indeed improve and that Government has allocated \$1.5 billion dollars to the FTTH programme. Currently, copper phone lines are used for both voice and data communication and because the technology has limited capacity, there can be little improvement in transmission speed.

FTTH stands for Fibre To The Home and this technology uses a fibre optic cable that has almost unlimited potential. As an example, Ernie said that a fibre cable with a diameter the same as a

broomstick handle could cope with every phone call being made by everyone in the world at the same time.

The intention in New Zealand is to provide fibre capability to schools, hospitals and emergency services initially and gradually expand to the metropolitan and country areas. The question then arises, " With such super speed of communication, what will it be used for?" Some of the examples included :

Health: With individual homes having high speed unlimited capacity for communication it would be possible to have video links where diagnoses and management could be managed, thereby lessening the need for institutional care.

Health professionals would be able to video conference to discuss (say) epidemics, and there could be a national record of everyone's medical needs. For instance this would be useful if someone with a heart problem collapsed in the street and was picked up by an ambulance. The attendants would be able to call up the person's record and know immediately what treatment to apply.

Education: Every pupil would have a personal, portable computer with access to the incredible amount of information on the internet. The teacher would not have to spend time learning subjects to teach but could become more of a coach, encouraging self learning.

Again, the ability to have video links could mean that smaller rural schools would still be viable

Aged Care: This is an area where there could be considerable scope for the use of high speed communication, not so much that "the olds" would be able to play faster and more complicated computer games, but more in the ability to have video links, sensors and monitors in every home. This would enable the elderly to stay in their own home, with improved contact not only with family, care givers and health professionals, but also with service organisations and supermarkets.

Other : FTTH capability would also allow introduction of Smart Meters and Grids that have the ability to monitor electricity usage and programme household appliances to operate at periods of low demand. Monitors could be installed in agricultural and horticultural activities to assess, supply and control water resources and both these could have a significant impact on the need to build dams and similar infrastructure.

The introduction of high speed broadband is planned to take place over the next ten years so it may be some time before we actually see some of these ideas come to fruition, but considering the changes we have seen in technology over the past ten years there can be little doubt that it will happen.

Next Meeting

The November meeting will be held on Friday 20th at 1.30 pm in the Arthritis Centre rooms and this will be the last meeting for the year. Margaret Dekker will tell us about her experiences with the GPS system in her car. (GPS is Global Positioning System: a navigational system involving satellites and computers).

Then, for the benefit of those thinking to change to Windows 7 we show you how to check whether you existing computer has the capability to run this new operating system.

The designer and distributor of the laptop stand advertised in the recent Federation Newsletter will be present at the meeting and he will have examples of the stand available for sale. These are normally priced at \$35 + GST + delivery but will be priced at \$30 for this occasion only.

Sending photos in an email.

There may come a time when you want to email a picture or a document but are not quite sure how to go about it. One way to make sure you have the procedure right is to compose the email, add the document or picture or whatever and send it to your *OWN* email address. If it comes back to your Inbox with the photos or document attached you can be confident that it will be received OK when you send it to the intended address.

This question of how to send photos as an attachment to an email often comes up at our Tuesday and Friday afternoon help sessions, so Graham Adam has produced a video on how to attach a number of photos to an email message.

Click on this link to view it: [Attach photos video](#)

(Note: You may need to press and hold the Control (Ctrl) key when you click on the link).

Security


The AVG antivirus software has been updated and is now at version 9.0. The free version can be downloaded from <http://free.avg.com> but if previous experience is anything to go by it can be quite a large download and almost impossible for those using a dial-up internet connection. So for the benefit of these members we have a copy of AVG 9.0 on disc at the Learning Centre and this can be borrowed for those who need it.

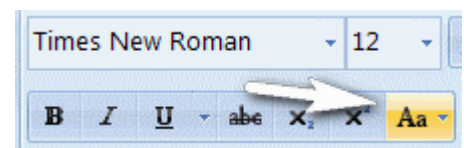
Word tip

Isn't it a nuisance when you find you have pressed the Caps Lock key instead of the Shift key and are so busy looking at the keyboard that you haven't realised that you have typed a whole line of text in capitals? Here is how to fix it –

First - select the incorrectly typed text - then

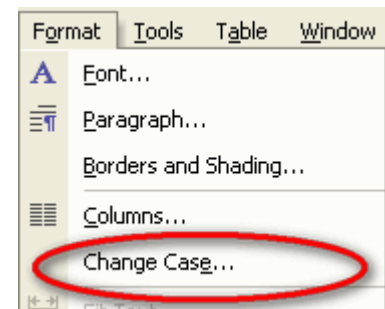
In Word 2007 –

On the **Home** tab, in the **Font** group, click **Change Case**  then from the next menu click either the *lower case* or *Sentence case* option as appropriate.



In Word 97 / 2003 –

Select **Format > Change Case** then click either the *lower case* or *Sentence case* option from the next menu as appropriate



The lower case option in the sub menu will change all the capitals to lower case, while the Sentence case option will change everything except the first letter. These will probably be the most used options but there are several others in the sub menu for you to experiment with.

There is another thing you can do that will stop this accidental selection of the Caps lock. You can set up an audible warning by going to **Start > Control Panel > Accessibility Options**. Select the **Keyboard** tab and click to place a tick in the box alongside "Use Toggle Keys" then **OK**. Now whenever you press the Caps lock key you will hear a "Beep" to warn you.

For those who may be a little hard of hearing you can set up a Visual warning by going to Accessibility Options as above but this time select the Sound tab to click and tick the box alongside "Use Sound Sentry". Then "Chose the visual warning" to either "Flash Active Caption Bar" or "Flash Active Window" and press **OK**. Or if you like you can set up both audible and visual warnings.

Training

There are no courses scheduled for the months of December and January. However the Learning centre will be open at 1.30 pm every Tuesday and Friday for most of this period. So if you need any help adding pictures or music to your Christmas email (or indeed anything else) there will be someone there to show you the way.

Don't forget

- the Monthly Meeting this coming Friday the 20th November
- the How Do I...? sessions on Tuesdays at 1.30
- the Drop In help sessions on Fridays at 1.30

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