

## December 2011 Newsletter

### Web Browsers, Cloud Backup, and another Little-Known Windows Feature

Ever give any thought to the web browser you are using? Most people don't, but I had to satisfy my curiosity about which is most popular, having seen some recent statistics on usage. Also, a question about Cloud Backup is covered, and I have another little-known Windows 7 feature to recommend.

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### Which Web Browser Was Voted Most Popular?

In case you were wondering why you had not heard about this vote, well there really wasn't a vote. This ranking is based on my own observations of traffic on three websites I manage. Think of it as "de-facto voting by usage". What better way to sample than with live data?

I am fortunate that the websites have up to eleven years of usage data, so I have a pretty rich historical base of statistics to which I can refer. I only used data for the years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 year-to-date, and there is an interesting story to tell. Below is the summarized table of results:

Browser Type	2008	2009	2010	2011
Microsoft - Internet Explorer (All versions)	83.1%	74.5%	70.5%	57.2%
Mozilla - FireFox (All versions)	7.1%	10.5%	12.4%	10.9%
Netscape (discontinued in 2009)	.1%	.1%	0%	0%
Apple - Safari (All versions)	7.2%	12.3%	12.5%	22.9%
Google - Chrome (released mid-2009)	--	1.4%	1.8%	4.5%
All Others (AOL, Opera, etc)	2.5%	1.2%	2.8%	4.5%

On the surface, it would appear that Internet Explorer's share of the market is shrinking while Google Chrome and Apple Safari are growing. A surface view is not telling the entire story, however.

The real story is the market has expanded overall since the advent of Tablet phenomenon. Many people bought one as a second computer, but even more bought it as their only computer... that is a major shift. This shift is not good news for Microsoft, as Internet Explorer is locked out those platforms. Safari is the main browser on the iPad, and Chrome is the primary browser on the Android platform.

Meanwhile, Mozilla FireFox has lost some share as well, probably due to the same effect of the exploding Tablet market. Lastly, one of the biggest names in the early days of the Internet, Netscape, has almost completely disappeared from sight. AOL and the remaining browsers have gained slightly after a dip in 2009.

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## Cloud Backup

Longtime newsletter reader Dr. Robert Corte recently asked about which Cloud Backup service is the best. While doing the preliminary research I discovered an excellent review published by the online **Information Week** magazine. I can't improve upon their findings, but I will explain a few terms and what to look for.

**Information Week Online Storage Buyer's Guide:**

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/storage/reviews/225600381>

Feature	Description
File Backup/Image Backup	Simple data file backup is a basic requirement. Some services offer an additional image backup which is a complete "snapshot" of the entire hard disk including all system and program files. Image backups are used in a complete bare-bones restoration of your computer, bypassing the laborious re-install of all software.
Sync Files / Briefcase	Keeps a copy of data files in sync between two computers (ie: work and home).
Workgroup / Multi-PC	Allows the backup program to be installed on more than one computer.
File sharing	The online folder can also be shared to 3 <sup>rd</sup> -parties as a file transfer method substitute for attachments that are too large to send via email.
Mobile App	Allows you to control / view / use files on your mobile device (SmartPhone).
Online Folder	Some programs have the capability to display an online folder as a local desktop folder. This feature allows you to drag/drop files to and from your local computer.
Courier Service	Some companies have a service that will overnight ship a portable hard disk to facilitate the first backup or speed up the restoration process in the case of data loss. With all online services, the initial backup can take a very long time, and the initial backup placed on a hard disk cuts that time to hours instead of days.
Encryption/Deduplication	All the services encrypt the data before it is backed up, that is a requirement. Some add an excellent sub-feature: deduplication. Deduplication senses that if two files are exactly the same, it backs up only one copy, saving on total disk storage costs. Upon restore, both copies are put back on your local computer.
Mapped Drives	Most online backup programs can only backup files located on physical hard disks. Some add mapped drives support to allow networked file backup as well.

## Another Little-known Windows 7 Feature: Snipping Tool

Ever wished you could just take a picture of your computer screen? There is the "Print Screen" function, but what if you want just part of the screen? Snipping Tool to the rescue! I use this feature to take snapshots of areas of my computer screen to use as illustrations in documents, training materials, and more.

Snipping Tool is found in the menu path: [Start] [Programs] [Accessories] [Snipping Tool]. All you need to do is click and hold your mouse over the section of screen you want to copy, and Snipping Tool "snaps" it to a workpad. From there, you can copy/paste it to a document, or save it as a picture file. Very handy!

As always, I welcome comments or suggestions... if you enjoy the newsletters, forward them to a friend.

And call me if you need computer help... Happy Holidays!

-John Becker

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