

# Technically Speaking

## Speech Recognition

By Allen Lode

Do you type slowly? Do you have a microphone or headset? If the answer to both of these questions is yes, well then you are in luck! Microsoft Word comes with a built-in speech recognition program. In fifteen minutes, you can talk to the computer and it will write your paper for you. The University laptops however, do not come with built-in microphones, but instead a headset can be purchased from Wal-Mart for around \$20.00.

To use the speech recognition software in Microsoft Word, first select Tools and then Speech. A dialog box will pop up notifying you that speech recognition is not currently installed and will

then ask if you want to install it now. After the speech recognition software has been installed, you will need to go through a short training process. The first step will be adjusting your microphone volume by simply repeating a sentence several times. The next step will actually train the computer to recognize your voice. This process will take about fifteen minutes, in which you will need to make sure that you are available to make a few minor corrections for this process. After the first training session, the software will be able to accurately recognize about 85 to 90% of the words that you dictate. As you continue to train the

program, accuracy will improve greatly. To continue training the program in the future, select Speech and the Control Panel.

That's all there is to it! Writing a paper has never been so easy. This article was essentially "typed" using the speech recognition software. The only things needing to be typed by hand were the punctuation and a few minor corrections. The document was even saved using my voice. When you are not typing, you can actually speak to the computer to give voice commands such as File, Save. So the next time a ten page paper is due, try **talking** to the computer instead of typing. 🐾

## On the Web!



### Fun Links

www.eBay.com

- One of the best sites to place old and unused items up for sale and possibly earn some extra cash. You can also find virtually anything to purchase to satisfy your shopping needs.

www.weather.com

- Enter Maryville's zip code (64468) to view local weather conditions to see if you need to bundle up for the cold!

www.neopets.com

- Create a pet and spend hours playing fun games. Beware of putting off homework as a result!

www.easybib.com

- Paper due?? No problem. EasyBib gives proper citation information.

**Printed copies of Technically Speaking are available at the Front Desk.**

## There is More Than One Way to Browse the Web

By Chris Grandfield

Have you ever heard anyone say they are going to get on the Internet? Then they open Internet Explorer, assuming it is the only way to surf the web. Well, Internet Explorer is not the Internet; it is a web browser. When it comes to web browsers, there is certainly more than one option. Many web browsers are available, but this article will only discuss a few.



First of all, the most common is Internet Explorer. Internet Explorer 6 SP2, which is the latest version of Internet Explorer, provides a flexible and reliable browsing experience with enhanced Web privacy features for all Windows users. Internet Explorer is a good web browser, but there are other browsers out there that simply have more bells and whistles.

One of the most popular is Mozilla Firefox. Firefox 1.5 has an intuitive interface and blocks viruses, spyware and popup ads. Firefox delivers web pages fairly quickly, is easy to install and import favorites, and is packed with useful features, like tabbed browsing, live bookmarks, and an integrated Search bar. To find more information on Firefox go to <http://www.mozilla.com/firefox/>.

Netscape is another available web browser, with many features similar to Firefox. The revolutionary new Netscape Browser 8 provides more security options, streamlines more standard browsing tasks, and arms Internet users with more timesaving solutions for their browsing needs. More Information on Netscape can be found at <http://browser.netscape.com/ns8/>. 🐾

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## Support Services

**Help Desk** x-1634

### Help Desk Hours

M-T	8 am—10 pm
Fri	8 am—5 pm
Sat	11 am—4:45 pm
Sun	1 pm—10 pm

### Notebook Support Center Hours

M-F 8 am—4:30 pm

### Library Lab Hours

M-T	7:30 am—11:45 pm
Fri	7:30 am—4:45 pm
Sat	11 am—4:45 pm
Sun	1 pm—11:45 pm

## New Email Accounts

While you were relaxing at home over winter break, Northwest officials were hard at work updating the university web-based email accounts. This would explain why many students experienced difficulty accessing their student account through the three week break. Gone was the old-fashioned, slow email. In its place was the new Exchange server. The new email address is: `username@nwmissouri.edu`. The old email address will continue to work for a year, but please notify correspondents of the change.

## Computer Lingo



### Terms you should know

**Web Browser-** A browser for the World Wide Web and used to view HTML files.

**Virus-** Small programs that can negatively affect the health of your computer by creating, moving, and erasing files to consume your computer's memory and cause your computer not to function correctly.

## Computer Tips



- While chatting on MSN Messenger or AIM, **DO NOT** accept picture downloads from friends. Another round of viruses is being sent out via messenger systems so simply decline any downloads to avoid potential headaches.
- Due to the recent virus threats, make it a priority to routinely back up any important files or programs

## Internet Phone

By Becky Rainford

VOIP, Voice Over Internet Protocol, is a telephone connection over the Internet. Data (your voice) is sent through the Internet instead of through typical phone lines. VOIP is also referred to as Internet Phone, Telephony, or Digital Phone. There are two different ways to access this Internet phone technology 1) through an Internet phone provider, like Vonage, or 2) through software, like Skype or Google Talk.

Accessing phone services through a provider replaces typical land lines but provides the same services, like call waiting and caller id, for a monthly fee, which is often lower than what the phone companies offer. With a VOIP provider, a person can send and receive phone calls using their normal home phone. The information just goes through the Internet lines instead of phone lines and they can also make calls to any land line, VOIP or cell phone. Some advantages of an Internet phone provider is that there is free long distance and low rates for international phone calls.

Another option for using VOIP technology is to make phone calls from your computer using VOIP software and is available here on campus. This software allows a user to make calls to any other person using the same software. The only equipment needed is a microphone or a USB headset and the VOIP software with Internet access. The main advantages of using this software are no monthly fees and no long distance or international charges for calls. A downside of using the software is a user must be by their computer to send or receive calls.



Internet phone is a great alternative for people who pay a lot for phone service or who have trouble with phone lines in their home but have high speed cable Internet. Contact your Internet provider to find out if your Internet provider offers VOIP services. 🐾

## Size Does Matter Portable Game-Play is In!

By Daman Kapoor

Lots of progress has been made regarding handheld gaming since the days of simple Tetris. Now there are so many functions offered in a handheld game console that you can even watch movies on some of them! In the past, portable gaming was restricted to the Nintendo Game Boy and the improved Game Boy Advance. Nintendo later upgraded with the Nintendo DS, which offers a dual-screen touch pad and wireless capabilities, priced at a modest \$129.99. Sony counter-attacked with the PlayStation Portable (PSP) priced at \$249.99.

Since the two gaming giants began competing in the portable market, there has been a never-ending argument over which one stands superior. The PSP boasts the best graphics available in any portable gaming platform. PSP's remarkable video, audio and digital image capabilities offer the potential to go beyond gaming and actually serve as a portable entertainment device, al-



lowing mini-DVD's to be played. Sony has now updated the PSP's firmware to enable Web browsing and television watching, while Nintendo upgraded its Game Boy platform with the miniaturized Limited Edition Game Boy Micro, priced at \$89.99. The Game Boy Micro possesses removable faceplates to satisfy any individual and the capability to adjust the brightness of the screen for indoor or outdoor use.



Nokia's new N-Gage simply cannot be overlooked, since it is still the only handheld gaming console that doubles as a phone and is the only handheld you can get for free--with a service contract. This is only the beginning of gamers' dreams; the future holds even more in store for us! 🐾



## Music Listening Options Internet Provides Many Choices

By Erin Jewell

Tired of driving down the road, listening to the same CD repeatedly? Ever turn on the radio only to discover commercial after commercial? Are you a listener of the radio station that repeats songs 30 minutes from the last time they were played? Chances are, you probably answered yes to at least one of the questions.

XM Satellite Radio offers the solution for frustrated music listeners. With over 160 digital channels, a subscription to XM will provide unlimited access to all of XM's 100% commercial-free music, over 30 channels of sports, news, talk, and entertainment, and 20 channels solely dedicated to weather and traffic updates. XM also enables listeners to indulge in live concerts. In addition, with its 2 million titles, XM boasts the deepest playlist in the industry. In February of this year, Dale Earnhardt Jr. will be launching a channel dedicated solely to NASCAR.

One of the best things that satellite radio provides is the fact that regardless of location, you will be able to listen to what you want, when you want. Satellite radio also provides excellent sound quality and superior sound resolution. The only drawback to satellite

radio however could be the price. In addition to purchasing a subscription to a satellite radio provider, such as XM or Sirius, you would also need to purchase a radio capable of receiving the satellite channels.

If the price discourages you from enjoying satellite radio, a cheaper option would be to utilize your computer to get free music. Major search engines, such as Yahoo! and MSN, offer free music radio stations. Yahoo! Music Unlimited, part of the LAUNCHcast Radio Station, offers over one million free songs to listeners and the ability to create a customized playlist. Including many genres, Yahoo! Music also boasts 245 music stations, all of which are incredible quality. If hearing the music is not enough, LAUNCHcast also premieres hundreds of music videos. Not only can you hear and see the artists performing, but Yahoo! Music also provides photos, news, reviews and interviews from your favorite artists. They even give a large selection (over 1200) for ring tones on your cell phone.

So the next time you are sitting in your room, doing your homework in silence because you don't have CD's available, go to the Internet for free music listening options! 🐾

By Meredith Manning

## The eBay Craze

Auction Web was first launched on September 4, 1995. Its founder, Pierre Omidyar, later renamed the site ebay.com by naming it after his consulting firm, Echo Bay. Since its conception, the site's membership has swelled to well over a hundred thousand registered members. The first item sold was Omidyar's broken laser pointer. After the auction, Omidyar contacted the winning bidder and asked if he understood the item was actually broken. Omidyar later learned the buyer was a collector of broken lasers.

Millions of trinkets, appliances, computers, furniture, sporting equipment, vehicles and

other miscellaneous items are posted, bought and sold daily. Any item can be sold on eBay as long as it is not on eBay's banned list. One of the largest items ever sold was a World War II submarine, sold by a small town in New England that decided it did not want the historical relic anymore. One of the most unusual sales was in June 2005, when Karolyne Smith sold the right to permanently tattoo an ad on her forehead to GoldenPalace.com for \$10,000. It is fair to say that eBay has reinvented the international marketplace by bringing together buyers and sellers worldwide in an enormous, never-ending garage sale and auction. 🐾

## Preview for Next Month...

Don't miss next month's edition to learn about Online Dating: The New Craze.

**Technically Speaking is a monthly PERT Newsletter for residents in Dieterich, Millikan, Franken, Phillips, Tower Suites, Douglas, and South Complex.**

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## Play That Funky Music



Sick of that pathetic sound coming out of your laptop but don't want to spend money for nice computer speakers? Available at Wal-Mart for \$5 is a cable that will connect your laptop to a television or even stereo speakers through the audio inputs. The cable has a headphone jack on one end and red and white RCA jacks on the other end. Check your stereo or surround sound system to see if it has the red and white audio inputs. If the purchased cable is not long enough, there are also headphone extension cables available that can extend the length on the speaker cable.

## PERT SPOTLIGHT

**Daman Kapoor  
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Daman is a sophomore who is originally from New Delhi, India. He is majoring in Interactive Digital Media – Computer Science Programming with a Database minor.

Daman likes to use the sparse leisure time he gets to workout in Lamkin Activity Center, read, play pool, listen to music and watch movies. He likes to spend his vacations in California and loves the perfect weather and beautiful beaches it has to offer. Daman is a gadget freak and loves what technology has to offer. He is obsessed with music and enjoys remixing, singing and playing the Piano.

In the future, Daman wants to pursue his Masters degree from the University of Southern California (USC). His dream is to work with a big Hollywood studio someday.