

Technically Speaking

What is a Cookie?

What is a Cookie? Is a cookie a tasty treat or is it a word used in a web browser?



Well believe it or not, a cookie is both. The basic definition of a cookie is a file with information about your preferences when you visit a given website. A cookie is a lot like a preference file for a typical computer program. When you visit a website after being sent a cookie for that website, the cookie basically remembers that you have been to the site before. Common items cookies store are things like your username and password so you do not have to reenter them every time you visit that site. Cookies are

also what allow you to have personalized websites where you can customize what is displayed like on "My MSN" or "My Yahoo".

Ok, so now we know what a cookie is and why we have it. Why the heck is it called a cookie? The origin of the word actually is a computer science term that is used when describing an opaque piece of data held by an intermediary. Lou Montulli, currently the protocols manager in Netscape's client product division, wrote the cookies specification for Netscape Navigator 1.0, the first browser to use the technology. The origin of the name is not particularly amusing. Therefore there is no reason

that a cookie is called a cookie. Lou Montulli just decided to call it a cookie and the other web browsers copied him.

If you do not want to have cookies on your computer, you can certainly delete them. In fact it is a good idea to delete cookies once in a while. They can build up over time depending on how much you surf the web. Most web browsers have it built in the options to delete the cookies. In Internet Explorer, go to the Internet Options under Tools and click the button that says delete cookies. Well now that you know what a cookie is and where it came from in the computer world, go have a cookie from the snack world. 🍪

By Chris Grandfield

On the Web!



Fun Links

theholidayspot.com/patrick/

- For everything and more about St. Patrick's Day.

www.blockfrenzy.com/

- Rumor has it the US Air Force uses this game for their fighter pilots. If you can go longer than 18 seconds, you are phenomenal. The pilots are expected to go for at least 2 minutes.

www.caedes.net/

- Need new wallpaper for your computer? They have hundreds of different images, from flowers to abstract creations.

www.howstuffworks.com/

- How does a spider work? If you want to know, this is the site for you.

Printed copies of Technically Speaking are available at the Front Desk

Photo Printing Services

Digital copies of your photos are nice to have; you can post them on your website or easily share them with friends and family all over the world through the Internet. However, sometimes it would be nice to have a hard copy of that favorite photo. Many online photo services will allow you to upload your photos and then print and mail your photos to you for a reasonable fee.



Digital prints are a great option and opens up a wide variety of choices for viewing your memories. You can easily choose the number of copies you need and in what sizes. So if you have taken a really cool photo or have created a piece of digital art in a editing program, you can have that printed in a variety of sizes.

Another neat feature of having photos printed through an online

service is most sites offer large poster sized prints for a reasonable price. Just think of the possibilities, with a little clever editing a 20"x30" poster sized collage of your favorite pictures can easily be ordered and mailed for around \$30. Smaller 4"x6" prints will cost about .20 cents a print.

Many services are available for printing online. Some good choices are shutterfly.com, snapfish.com and Kodakgallery.com. Wal-Mart also offers digital prints through their website with the option of having the photos mailed to you or picked up from the store. Ordering online is a great option to avoid waiting in lines at Wal-Mart. Before choosing an online service, remember to do a little research about the website to see if they are reputable. 🍪

By Becky Rainford

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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

MovieBeam

MovieBeam is a service being introduced in 29 major markets.  Users will have a choice of 100 movies with 10 new titles replacing old ones each week. Movie watchers will buy the MovieBeam box for \$250 from almost any electronics store. This service does not charge a monthly fee, but movies cost \$3.99 each for current titles and \$1.99 for older ones. Customers will be able to watch the movie for a 24-hour period. The advantage of MovieBeam is unlike other services customers do not have to wait for their DVD's to come in the mail and no monthly subscription cost.

Computer Lingo



Terms you should know

Network- a group of computers that are hooked together.

LCD- stands for "Liquid-Crystal Display". LCD's are lighter and consume less power than other displays.

Buffer- an area of memory a hardware device or software program uses when it needs a constant, uninterrupted flow of information.

Computer Tips



- To keep a CD from auto-starting when you insert it into the CD drive, hold down the Shift key while you put it in the drive.
- Is your desktop crowded with open windows? Hold down the Windows key (the four curved boxes) and tap the D key. They will all minimize. Want to reverse that? Hold down the Windows + D again.

Now who wrote that?

By Erin Jewell


It's crunch time. Your paper is due first thing tomorrow morning and, like usual, you have waited until last minute to start it. You think: "I don't have time to write a good paper. I'll just go to the Internet and do some copy and pasting! My teacher will be too dumb to know." WRONG!

Many students fall into the trap of waiting until the last minute to begin an assignment and then, fearing a bad grade, go straight to the Internet for help. Copying from the Internet is a sure way to get an F in whatever course the project was assigned in, not to mention the possibility of being permanently kicked out of the university. This fast-moving epidemic of taking another's work has become quite common in universities around the country.

According to Webster's Dictionary, plagiarism is the concept of taking one's work or ideas



and passing them off as your own. Northwest Missouri State University abides by the following policy: For the first offense, a student will receive an F in the course and face an appeals process. For the second offense, the student will be immediately dismissed from the university. While the Internet makes it easier and easier for students to copy another's work, it also makes it easier for professors to research the authenticity of a student's work. All that a professor would need to do with a suspect paper would be to go to a free search engine and type in one sentence from that paper. It is that simple to get an F.

The best way to avoid being accused of academic dishonesty would be to begin all assignments early with enough time to do a thorough job and make sure to cite all sources you get any information from. Remember the above mentioned consequences the next time you complete an assignment! 

Going Computer Shopping?

By Meredith Manning

Laptop or Desktop?

With so many to choose from how do you know which computer is right for you? Here are some tips to help you choose.

Desktop Computers



The desktop computer has become just another appliance you use every day. Replacement sales now drive the computer market. Fully loaded desktops selling for less than \$800 are common.

Dozens of companies are vying to put a new desktop in your home. Dell, Gateway, Hewlett-Packard, IBM and Sony all make machines that use the Microsoft Windows operating system. Apple is the only manufacturer of Macintosh models.

Pros: Desktops start at a lower price. Dollar for dollar, desktops generally offer more than laptops in terms of hard-drive capacity, memory and sound quality. They also have more options for expansion and are easier (and less costly) to repair.

Cons: Desktops eat up desk space even with a thin LCD monitor.


Price: \$400 to \$3,000 plus.

Laptop Computers

Small screens and cramped keyboards have been replaced by bigger, crisper displays and more usable key layouts. Fast CD and DVD recording drives are common, as are ample hard drives. The growing interest in laptops can be attributed to the laptop's main strength of portability. A laptop is the most convenient way to take advantage of the growing availability of high-speed wireless Internet access at many campus locations. The thinnest laptops on the market are less than an inch thick and weigh just 2 to 5 pounds. To get these light, sleek models, you will have to pay extra and make some sacrifices.

Pros: Laptops can do just about anything that desktops can do. They can be carried anywhere and easily tucked away when not needed. Research has also shown that laptops appear to be less repair-prone than desktops.

Cons: Laptops cost hundreds more than comparably equipped desktop models. Internal components and add-on drives are costly to repair. Portability also means they are easy to steal and at greater risk of damage.

Price: \$700 to \$3,000 plus. 



It is in the Air

By Daman Kapoor

Ever wondered how the wireless Internet in the library, station or union work? Wireless access is made possible by WiFi technology, which is the wireless way to handle networking. WiFi is also known as 802.11 networking.

If you want to understand wireless networking at its simplest level, think about a pair of walkie-talkies that you might purchase at Wal-Mart. Walkie-talkies are small radios that can transmit and receive radio signals. When you talk into a walkie-talkie, your voice is picked up by a microphone, encoded onto a radio frequency and transmitted with the antenna. Another walkie-talkie can receive the transmission with its antenna, decode your voice from the radio signal and play the transmission through a speaker.

The radios used in wireless networking are not so different from the radios used in walkie-talkies. They have the ability to transmit and receive data. To enable this exchange of data, wireless access points are set up at several hotspots at Northwest and your note-

book contains a 802.11g network adapter. The network adapter connects to the wireless access point and enables you to surf the Internet.

WiFi transmits at much higher frequencies than a walkie-talkie and with encoding techniques WiFi radios can handle a lot more data per second. However, interference can lead to slower data transmission. The Northwest wireless network transmits data at 2.4 GHz. Hence, interference to the Northwest wireless network can be caused by any equipment working at 2.4 GHz. Common equipment that works at this frequency are cordless phones, Xbox and Playstation wireless controllers, and some wireless keyboards. Please make sure you do not use devices that work at 2.4 GHz frequency on the Northwest campus since use of these devices is a campus computing policy violation. The wireless Internet zones at Northwest are located at Owens Library, the Union, the Station, Forest Village Commons and the MO Academy Lounge. 🐾

By Allen Lode

Biometric Authentication

Does entering your national security compliant password every time you log onto your computer seem like a hassle? If so, maybe you should look into a new way to authenticate yourself.

A person can validate their identity with one of three basic methods: what a person knows (passwords or PIN numbers), what a person has (an identification card or security token), or what a person is (thumbprint or eye scan). You currently use what you know to log onto university computers, email and CatPAWS. However, you can acquire a biometric device that scans a part of you that is unique and unable to be reproduced or guessed like a password.

Some biometric devices include eye scans, facial recognition, voice recognition, hand geometry and fingerprint identification, which is

currently the most popular and economic method. Eye scans look for either retinal patterns or iris coloration. Facial recognition devices identify landmark features. Voice recognition usually involves repeating a word or phrase. Hand geometry looks at finger length and angles.

A fingerprint identification system can be purchased for as little as \$50 and can store passwords for up to 20 users for logging on to a computer, accounts at online retailers, email and many more. The newest scanners scan the print below the surface, so you don't have to worry about having a dirty or oily hand. Just do not rely on the scanner to remember your passwords forever or you may run into trouble if it breaks down or is unavailable. 🐾



MARIO Day!




March 10th is Mario day, the unofficial holiday devoted to Mario from the popular Nintendo video games.

Why March 10th? Maybe you noticed, but by writing the date as Mar10 it spells Mario. This coincidence has led Nintendo fans everywhere to celebrate their love for Mario.

To celebrate your love for all things Mario, you can:

- Download a picture of Mario for your desktop.
- Find someone with a Nintendo System and play some old-school Mario Bros. or download an emulator and play on your computer.
- Send all your friends happy MARIO Day cards/emails.
- Download the Mario theme song for your cell phone ringer.

DeathbyCab.com

What is the latest, greatest thing to hit the Internet? 

That would be VoIP programs (see January issue). What's the second greatest thing? DeathbyCab.com!

The guys on second floor of Douglas Hall (and anyone else who wants to contribute) have kick started what could possibly become the best website to hit the World Wide Web in decades. The creator's purpose for the site is to "have every little thing your little heart could possibly desire" including, but not limited to "videos, songs, comics, and TONS of other crazy stuff that we can have lots of fun with." Get online and check it out... NOW!

Preview for Next Month...

Do not miss next month's edition to learn how to find a search engine that fits your needs.

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

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