

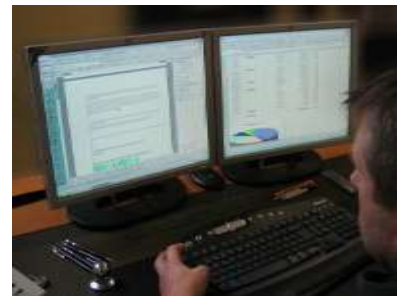
### ***In This Months TechPoints***

- Like Two Eyes, Two Monitors Are Better Than One
- 5 Facebook Spam Posts to Be Aware Of
- Apple's New Mobile Phones
- 7 Timesaving Google Search Tips

## **Like Two Eyes, Two Monitors Are Better Than One**

By Chris Scerbo, Systems Engineer, TechSolutions, Inc.

The thing that is used most in the business computing world nowadays is the display or monitor as they are also called. For decades there has been a standard arrangement for configuring and positioning the various computer components at a person's workspace. A monitor, with a monitor stand, on top of a desk, facing the user in an ergonomically correct position, and so on and so forth. And hey, if it works, great. I prefer to devote a little more real estate to my computer arrangement. That's why I have 4 monitors. Well, I'm a techy geek. It's okay for me. It might look weird on your desk though...



However, there is a definitive trend in the market towards a new style of interfacing with a computer. In addition to the popularity of portable devices with small screens, the desktop workspace is also changing. Last decade, when flat panel displays started becoming more popular, the top of people's desks became less cluttered. For those who really wanted to free up some space, wall-mounted monitors could be utilized to get rid of the monitor stand and most of the unsightly cords and cables and to free up about 2-3 square feet of area on the desk. In the future, we might see aesthetically improved and form fitting displays, and maybe someday everything will stop being a rectangle of some sort. But I digress...

In the current realm of mainstream technology, a secondary monitor is both affordable and useful. The less time users spend switching between tasks, the easier multi-tasking becomes. Instead of having to minimize one window to be able to see another one, users with dual monitors can put those 2 windows on separate displays so both can be seen at once. Perhaps you would like to have your email displayed on one monitor while working with a document on the other. An email comes in and you can immediately see your inbox without disrupting your existing work on the other monitor. Just turn your head to change tasks instead of having to minimize and then maximize and then minimize and then maximize again. Having an additional display truly adds productivity in the form of quicker interface changes.

Another fun trick for a multi-display workspace is to use one of the monitors rotated 90 degrees to be in portrait mode. Many monitors come with mounts that are capable of allowing the monitor to rotate back and forth between portrait and landscape modes. This portrait view is better fitted to word processing document pages. In portrait mode, one page of a document will fill the entire screen for easy reading without having to scroll. Scrolling while reading is more work for the eyes and the brain. Obviously, people read and scroll all the time without trouble in a variety of applications. But if a majority of your job is to

read documents electronically, a monitor configured in portrait mode may be more comfortable and more productive for you.

## **Windows 8 Multi-Display Support**

Although secondary displays have been an option since Windows 98, there have been many improvements to both the software and the hardware used to implement them. The hardware improvements include better graphics cards and better interfaces (from VGA to DVI, HDMI, or DP). From a software perspective, Windows 8 has introduced some great features that make the multi-display experience much better.

As an example, in previous versions of Windows, the task bar only appears on a single monitor – the one labeled the “primary display”. By default in Windows 8, the task bar appears on each of the screens so that programs can be accessed more easily. Windows 8 is also able to handle icon and desktop rearrangements more seamlessly as displays are powered off or on during operation of the computer. Another addition is the ability to have different background images (also called wallpaper) between screens. Obviously that has nothing to do with productivity, but I like a nice background. The list goes on but suffice it to say the multi-display experience is much improved in Windows 8 and Windows 8.1.

If this article makes you want to investigate getting dual screens for yourself, give us a call so we can help you get the most out of your decision. If you would like 4 or even 8 displays, I’m your man. If you want something affordable and useful (as opposed to expensive overkill), anyone at TechSolutions would be able to offer assistance on that front. Not only can we help you purchase what you need, we can provide advice gained from experience because every person in our office is set up to use two monitors. It has definitely resulted in increased productivity and I would recommend it highly. So if you have any questions or want some pricing, give us a call and start making your computing experience just a little more productive.

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## **5 Facebook Spam Posts to Be Aware Of**

As of the first quarter of 2014, Facebook has 1.28 billion active users (users who log in at least once a month). With around a fifth of the world’s population using the service, you can bet that it is a target for spammers and hackers. If you use Facebook on a regular basis, there is a good chance that you have seen some suspicious or outright blatant spam links. Clicking on these could lead to sites that are set up to steal information so it is a good idea to be aware of the five most common spam and malware posts on this social media platform.

### **1. Statistics on Profile visits**

Spend enough time on Facebook and you will likely see this type of post on your Timeline. The post usually shows itself off as an app that allows users to see who has been viewing their personal profile, or the statistics related to profile views. There is also a link to click to either go to a site or install an app.

These posts look legitimate, but Facebook doesn’t actually allow these apps, so clicking on them usually leads to malicious apps or sites. As some of these posts contain links to Facebook apps, you will be asked to allow the app permissions like access to personal data, friends lists, etc. These apps won’t work, but they do give the developer access to your information which could then be used to start other malicious hacks.

### **2. Changing the color of your Profile**

With the wide number of apps, devices, and other technology available to us, developers are often keen to offer users the ability to customize how their app looks. For example, you may have applied your own

themes or changed icons with your browser. Therefore, it makes sense that some users might want to change the color of their Facebook Profile from the standard blue that everyone uses.

There are apps out there that supposedly allow you to do this. However, Facebook doesn't allow users to customize the color of their Profile – it's blue for everyone. Therefore, the apps and links that supposedly allow you to change the color are fake and likely related to spam or malicious content. It's best to not click on the links in these posts, or install apps that say they allow you to do this customization.

### **3. Check if a friend has deleted/unfriended you**

This post seems to come up every six months or so on Facebook. Like the statistics on Profile visits, apps claiming to allow you to check if you have been unfriended are fake. The biggest giveaway that this is a fake app or post is the wording. When someone doesn't want to be connected with you on Facebook, they will 'unfriend' you, not 'delete' you as these posts often claim. Needless to say, it is best to refrain from clicking on these links and apps.

### **4. Free stuff from Facebook**

If you are a Facebook fan then you might like a free Facebook t-shirt, hat, water bottle, etc. There is a known post that shows up from time-to-time declaring that Facebook is giving away free stuff, and that if you click on the link in the post you too can get hold of some freebies.

Facebook does not usually give away stuff via network posts. Those people you see walking around with Facebook apparel usually either work for the company, had it printed themselves, or attended a Facebook event. Therefore, if you see these posts, don't click on the link.

### **5. Revealing pics or videos of celebrities**

With all the recent leaks of celebrity photos and videos, you can be sure that the number of posts popping up on your News Feed with links to these types images and videos will become increasingly popular.

Not only is this obscene, the posts are 100% fake. Clicking on any of the links will likely take you to a site with 'files' that you need to download. The issue is, these files are actually malware and can pose a serious security risk.

As a general rule of thumb: Don't click on any links in posts connected to celebrities and revealing images or videos.

### **What can I do about these posts?**

These tips are mainly for individual Facebook users as this is whom hackers and spammers are targeting the most. How is this an issue for your business? Well, if an employee is browsing Facebook at work and clicks on one of the links in posts like the ones above, there is a good chance they could introduce malware into your systems and networks.

Therefore, you might want to educate your employees about common Facebook security threats like the ones above. Beyond this, you should encourage everyone to take the following steps when they do come across content like this:

1. Click the grey arrow at the top-right of the post.
2. Select I don't want to see this.
3. Click Report this Post.

This will ensure that the post itself is deleted and that the content is reported to Facebook for follow-up. Usually, if there are enough reports, Facebook will look into the content and likely ban the user.

## Apple's New Mobile Phones

For many Apple fans, September 9 was a big day; possibly the biggest day of the year. This was the day Apple announced not only new iPhones, but also a new smartwatch and some interesting changes to the upcoming update to iOS 8. If you missed the news then here is a quick overview of the announcements made by Apple.



### The iPhone 6

Before the September 9 event, rumors were flying for months about a new iPhone that Apple was working on. The company did not disappoint and announced a new version of their staggeringly popular phone. Here's an overview of the iPhone 6 specs which business owners and managers will want to know about.

- **Screen:** The iPhone 6 will have a 4.7 inch screen (measured diagonally), and will sport Apple's new display, Retina HD, which has more pixels for a much improved image quality.
- **Size:** The phone will be 5.44 x 2.64 inches and .27 inches thick. The device's shape has also been changed slightly with a more rounded body (compared to the iPhone 5's squared body) which should make it easier to hold.
- **Processor:** This device will have what Apple calls the A8 processor. This is an improved processor over the one found in previous devices like the iPhone 5, and offers 25% faster speeds and 50% better efficiency. In other words, the device will be able to do more than previous versions, and do it faster.
- **Storage:** You can choose either 16GB, 64GB, or 128GB of storage space.
- **Battery life:** Apple has noted that the iPhone 6 should have the same, or slightly better, battery life than previous models. While this may not seem like an improvement, you need to take into account the bigger screen which requires more power to run.
- **Pricing:** In the US, the iPhone 6 starts at \$199 for the 16GB of storage. It should be noted that this is the price on a two year contract. If you want to purchase the model outright, prices start at \$649 for the 16GB. Both the on-contract and outright purchase prices go up \$100 for each increase in storage.

### The iPhone 6 Plus

Alongside rumors about the impending iPhone 6, there were also rumors that Apple would be introducing a larger version of the iPhone 6 that is designed to compete with the various "phablets" (small tablets with phone capabilities) which are immensely popular these days. They did indeed announce a new, larger version of the iPhone 6 called the iPhone 6 Plus. Here is an overview of the major details that will benefit business owners and managers.

- **Screen:** The iPhone 6 Plus will have a 5.5 inch screen (measured diagonally) and, like the iPhone 6, will have Apple's new display, Retina HD.
- **Size:** The phone will be 6.22 x 3.06 inches and .28 inches thick. The device's shape has also been changed slightly with a more rounded body. It may take time to get used to the screen size and some users may not be able to use the device comfortably with one hand.
- **Processor:** This device will have what Apple calls the A8 processor. This is an improved processor over the one found in previous devices like the iPhone 5, and offers 25% faster speeds and 50% better efficiency. In other words, the device will be able to do more, faster, than previous versions.
- **Storage:** You can choose either 16GB, 64GB, or 128GB of storage space.
- **Battery life:** Apple has noted that the iPhone 6 Plus will have a larger battery that supposedly offers 24 hours of talk time. Because this device hasn't been fully tested yet, it's difficult to tell what the actual battery life will be like, but it will likely be enough to get you through a day of moderate use.
- **Pricing:** In the US, the iPhone 6 Plus starts at \$299 for the 16GB of storage. It should be noted that this is the price if you get the device on a two year contract. If you want to purchase it outright, the device starts at \$749 for the 16GB. Both the on-contract and outright prices go up \$100 for each increase in storage.

## The Apple Watch

Apple wasn't done with just two mobile devices however, they also proved rumors true and announced a new device – the Apple Watch. This is Apple's take on the smartwatch that appears to be gaining traction with many users.

The Apple Watch is a rectangular device that is worn on the wrist and, as the name implies, is a watch. Well, a watch with numerous features that many users will no doubt enjoy. The device has a knob at the top-left which Apple calls the “digital crown”, that you use to navigate the device. For example, pressing it opens the device's home screen, while turning it will zoom the face.

You can also interact with the device via touch. For example, you will be able to swipe up from the bottom of the screen to open a feature Apple calls Glance. This provides you with useful information like the date, weather, notifications, etc.

Because typing on a device that is on your wrist is pretty much impossible to do accurately, the device supports voice commands and even interaction with Siri. The Apple Watch also has a multitude of sensors including health related ones like a heart rate sensor.

So far, it appears like this device is mainly aimed towards individual users, but business users who are looking for a way to interact with their devices or a different way to keep track of their most important information like calendars, etc. may find it useful too.

If the watch sounds interesting, you are going to have to wait for a while, as Apple has said it won't be released until the spring of 2015. While this may seem like a long time to wait, it could prove to be positive, as it gives the company more time to perfect the device. When released, Apple has noted that the Apple Watch will start at \$350.

## New iOS 8 features

New devices weren't all that was introduced at the event, Apple also talked about some new features that will be introduced in iOS 8.

- **Near Field Communication (NFC) and ApplePay** - Both the new iPhone 6s and the Apple Watch will ship with NFC chips in the device. These can be used in conjunction with Apple's new pay service, ApplePay. Like other similar apps, you will be able to use your phone as a wallet, and swipe it over pay terminals to pay for items. Your payment information is stored in Passbook which creates a unique ID for each credit card, but does not store your credit card information.
- **Enhanced navigation** - With bigger screens on both of the new iPhones, many users will want to hold the phone in landscape (horizontal) mode for easier viewing of apps. iOS 8 will enable this.
- **New gesture – Reachability** - Reachability is a new gesture that will allow users to quickly switch the content at the top of the screen by tapping twice on the Home button.

For those of you who have an existing iPhone or iPad, you should have been asked to upgrade to iOS 8 when it came out September 17.

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## 7 Timesaving Google Search Tips

Google Search is arguably the most popular search engine in the world. For business users it has become the first port of call when they are looking for information on nearly anything and everything, and many of us use it on a daily basis. While we may find what we need, there are numerous tips and tricks to help you find what you are looking for quicker. Here are seven:

## Search inside one site only

Oftentimes, we are looking for an article, words, page, or even image from one site. If you simply search for it on Google, you may find the site right away, but you will also see results from other sites. To narrow down the results a little, you can use something called a search operator. Search operators are words or symbols that you can add to a search to achieve quicker, more accurate results. In this case try using the search operator **site:**.

When using **site:** followed by a web address in the search bar (without a space), Google shows results for that site at the top of the results list. So, if you are looking for an article that has the keywords: 'cloud technology' on CNN, you can enter: **site:cnn.com cloud technology**.

## Search for results based on a page's title

If you are looking for a specific webpage, but don't know the site it is on, you can use the operator: **intitle:** followed by keywords. This tells Search to look for webpages that contain the keywords in the title.

For example, if you are looking for a webpage that has the title: five cloud tips, you can search for it by entering: **intitle: five cloud tips**. Note, be sure to add a space between the operator and the keywords/titles.

## Do two searches at once

Using an **OR** operator between two keywords tells Search to show results for both of the keywords at the same time. This can be useful for when you are looking to quickly compare two different ideas or topics.

The key to making this operator work is to make sure that **OR** (in capital letters) is between the two terms you are looking for, and separated by a space on both sides.

## Exclude certain results or keywords

With many Google searches you will often see results for local businesses with a presence on Google first, or results related to your local area. While these can be useful, when you are looking for non-local results, it can take time to sort through these findings.

If you see that there are a number of results with keywords or terms that you are not interested in, then put a **-** (minus) in front of the term (without a space) e.g., **-term**, and Search will not show results containing that word.

## Quickly find sites that link to yours (or another)

One of the key components of successful SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is link building – the concept of increasing links to and from your site. With Search's various updates, Google is constantly changing the way sites are ranked and displayed in results. Businesses with websites need to ensure that the links they are using to direct to other content, or to bring people into their site are legitimate.

One quick way to see who links to your site is to use the Search operator: **link:site.com**. Simply enter **link:yoursite.com**, and Google will display results for all other sites and content that contain links to your site.

## Fill in the blank searches

Looking for something where you know the first and last part of say the name, title, sentence, etc? You can use the Search operator **\*** to help. The **\*** (asterix) functions as what is called a wildcard, or unknown, operator. When used, it tells Search that you don't know the words that are missing, and that you want Search to try and fill in the results.

## Use quotes to search for exact terms

The way Search works is that when a set of keywords are entered with spaces, Search will return results that contain the words either separately or together in any order. If you know exactly what you are looking for, you can add double quotes (“”) around the terms.

By using double quotes, Google will show results that only contain those exact words, in that order. While this is useful, longer sentences in quotes will return fewer results, so if you aren’t finding what you are looking for, try reducing the number of words inside the quotes.

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