Radio Days – 2012-11-10

Tip of the Week – Windows 8

During the week I had my first glimpse of a client's computer with Windows 8 on it. While it is not as confusing as I first thought there are a few gotchas that I had not expected.

- Shutting down is not as easy or as intuitive as expected, if you have used Windows XP or later. First you have to log off (if you can find out how!) then you have to close down from the logon screen!
- Finding simple things like the Control Panel is fraught with problems and blind alleys. The Control Panel is designed to help you make your computer yours: it allows you to change things like the way that the dates display and sets your time zone correctly.

I shall continue to work with Windows 7 until all these niggles have been removed: possibly with Service Pack 1 (SP1). Meanwhile, for all of you with the urge to get with the latest but not greatest, enjoy the frustration of Windows 8!

Keyboard Shortcuts

I recently had a client who was frustrated by the new (well, for her) ribbon interface for Word 2010. She had just had it installed on her computer by her son and the new ribbon was just too confusing. She managed to remove the ribbon but was not sure how she had done this. She liked the extra space that removing the ribbon gave her.

To remove the ribbon and just show the bar with the headings use your mouse and right-click on the headings area (*Home*, *Insert*, etc) to bring the *Context Menu*. The bottom item on this menu is *Minimise the Ribbon*: left-click this option and the icons below the ribbon headings will be removed. To display these icons again, you right-click on the ribbon menu then again left-click on *Minimise the Ribbon*. This is like a light switch: it removes or replaces the tick next to *Minimise the Ribbon*.

There are many keyboard shortcuts, and a touch typist will find that using them is quicker than moving your hand from the keyboard to the mouse, clicking on the action to be performed then moving your hand back from the mouse to the keyboard.

Modifier Keys

All these keyboard shortcuts use a modifier key or keys together with a letter or number key. All modifier keys are held down then the key to be modified is pressed. You will often see an instruction like *Copy (Ctrl + C)*. This means that you hold the *Ctrl* (pronounced *Control*) key down, press and release the *C* key then release the *Ctrl* key. This copies the selected text to the computer's clipboard.

Sometimes you will need to press more than one modifier key. In Microsoft Word you will see this instruction to create a superscript. A superscript is a letter or number which appears higher in the text than normal. An example is today's temperature: 21° C. The instruction for this is *Superscript (Ctrl + Shift + +)*. This means holding down the *Ctrl* and *Shift* keys at the same time then pressing the plus key "+" before releasing the *Ctrl* and *Shift* keys.

There are four modifier keys. The one which most people know is the shift key. This is used to type a capital letter when used with a letter key. It is also used to type other characters, like #, $, % and *, when used with a numeric key.

The four modifier keys are:

- Shift
- Ctrl
- Windows
- Alt

Hold down the correct modifier key or keys then press the required letter or number to get the desired result.

Windows Shortcuts

Many shortcuts to be used for Windows actions use the Windows key as the modifier. This is the key between the *Ctrl* and *Alt* keys to the left of the spacebar. Some of these shortcuts are:

- Windows + E – Windows Explorer
- Windows + D – your Desktop
- Windows + F – Find or Search
- Windows + L – Lock the desktop or switch users
- Windows + M – Minimise all windows
- Windows + Shift + M – Restore all windows minimised using Windows + M
- Windows + R – Run a program
- Windows + U – Ease of Access Centre
- Windows + P – Switch between normal screen and projector

Other Windows shortcuts use other keys. For example:

- Alt + Tab – switch between running programs
- Ctrl + Tab – switch between the windows of the currently-active program, eg all open documents in Word
- Alt + F4 – close the current program
- Ctrl + F4 – close the current window, eg the current Word document.

Common Shortcuts

There are many shortcuts which are a Windows standard and so are used in the vast majority of programs. Some of these are:

- Ctrl + X – Cut
- Ctrl + C – Copy
- Ctrl + V – Paste
- Ctrl + P – Print
- Ctrl + Z – Undo
- Ctrl + B – Bold
- Ctrl + I – Italic
- Ctrl + U – Underline

Further Information

None this week.