

# Radio Days – 2013-09-21

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## ***Tip of the Week – Free Email Programs***

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There are many free email programs, and they vary dramatically in their quality. A client had just bought a new Windows 8 computer to replace her aging and virus-ridden Windows XP computer and wanted all her data copied from the old computer to the new computer, and all her old programs installed onto her new computer.

Copying data from one computer to another is usually a simple matter: you just insert a USB stick into the old computer, copy the old computer's data onto the USB stick then insert the USB stick into the new computer then copy the old computer's data onto the new computer. This is what I did, and everything worked.

### ***Copying Emails and Address Book***

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The usual caveat applies: you must also copy the old computer's email messages and address book information onto the USB stick before you remove it from the old computer. This is usually easier said than done.

For some reason all email program writers place their emails in a place where it is almost impossible to find them. The usual folder is a hidden one which is about six or seven levels deep and, for most people, a search will not find it. I have found that the easiest way to find emails is to open the email program then use it to move the emails to a folder which is easy to find. I usually create a folder called *Emails* in the *My Documents* folder: it is easy to find later when copying files to the new computer.

### ***Free Email Programs***

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For some years now I have been using a free email program from Microsoft called Windows Mail. I tried to download it for my client but found that I had to create a Windows Account. I do not like this feature of Microsoft's later offerings because I believe that it gives too much control and information to a large American corporation. Searching for the best free email program I came across a number of sites which recommended *Thunderbird* as the best free email program. Thunderbird is created by the same people who create the Firefox browser for the web, and this is one of the best browsers around.

I downloaded and installed Thunderbird then copied all the emails and addresses from her old Windows XP email client: Outlook Express. There were no problems entering the settings so that Thunderbird could send and receive emails. All in all, this was a delightful experience. Highly recommended.

## ***YouTube Videos***

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A client who lives some distance away wanted some help. I have previously visited him and in my first visit I installed a program called *CrossLoop*. This free program allow me to help a client using the internet. We can talk on the phone while I help a client do what they want. Because my phone plan gives me unlimited free calls between 6 pm and 6 am we always do this support in the evening.

### ***CrossLoop***

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The first step is to start CrossLoop. My client (or any other user) then reads the 12-digit number on the CrossLoop screen and I type that number into my copy of CrossLoop. We both the press *Connect* and the CrossLoop servers connect us. This can take a minute or two to complete then my client will see a message asking if they want to give me control of their computer. They click on *Yes* and I can then see their computer screen on my screen. This

gives me the chance to see what my client is doing so that I can help them or I can perform tasks that my client does not want to do.

I can also use my computer normally. This is handy when I want to perform a complex or time-consuming task on my computer because this is faster than waiting for the same task on their computer.

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### ***Downloading YouTube Videos***

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My client wanted to download some videos from YouTube so that he could play them on his computer. There were a number of steps to follow before he could do this. The first step was to find out how to download videos. There was a helpful video on YouTube (where else?) showing you how to download videos without installing any software. There is a simple trick: when you find the video that you want to download you put the two letters *ss* just before the *youtube* in the address. Please watch the video: the link to the video is at the bottom of this document.

We downloaded the videos which he wanted so that he could watch them on his computer. He also wanted to make a CD so that he could take them to his friends and show the videos which he had downloaded. This was the next step.

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### ***Burning CDs and DVDs***

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Because he did not have a CD / DVD burning program on his computer I downloaded my favourite free burning program. This is called *Ashampoo Burning Free* and is free from the Ashampoo website: just click on *Downloads* then select *Free* under *Select product type*. Then you download and install the program.

His next step was to create a CD with all the recently-downloaded YouTube videos. This was a simple task: just use Ashampoo Burning Free to create the CD. We completed this task and signed-off for the night. This new CD played well on his computer so we signed-off for the night.

Then came the bad news: while the CD played well on his computer it did not play on his DVD player.

He then discovered a feature of Ashampoo: it had a feature called *Burn movies*. This allows you to create a Video CD (or VCD). He had tried this feature but could not load any files onto the VCD. We started again.

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### ***File Conversion***

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It turns out that a VCD needs video files coded using the MPEG (or MPG) format but the files which we had downloaded from YouTube were in MP4 format so we needed to download a program to convert the files to this new format.

Again the internet came to the rescue. I found a program called *iLivid* which did the trick. Unfortunately, when we came to convert the videos, they turned out not to have enough information to be able to encode them to the MPEG format so it refused to do conversions.

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### ***Conclusion***

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Although we had managed to download videos and burn them to a CD which played on his computer, we could not manage to burn a video to a VCD because the conversion software stated that the YouTube videos did not have enough information for Ashampoo to be able to burn a VCD.

I trust Ashampoo and use the full version for all my burning needs so I am lost for any way to go. If you know how to create a VCD or a DVD from YouTube videos please let me know.

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## ***Further Information***

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Thunderbird	<a href="http://www.mozilla.org/thunderbird">www.mozilla.org/thunderbird</a>
CrossLoop	<a href="http://www.crossloop.com">www.crossloop.com</a>
YouTube	<a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a>
How to download YouTube videos	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_4ZZbs-Apw">www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_4ZZbs-Apw</a>
Ashampoo	<a href="http://www.ashampoo.com">www.ashampoo.com</a>
iLivid	<a href="http://www.ilivid.com">www.ilivid.com</a>