

Wildcard

the official newsletter of CompSAt



it's
FREE

THIS ISSUE

FREE/OPEN
source games

WindowsLive

PortableApps

SURVEY

gaming in CompSAt

Wildcard

is the official newsletter of



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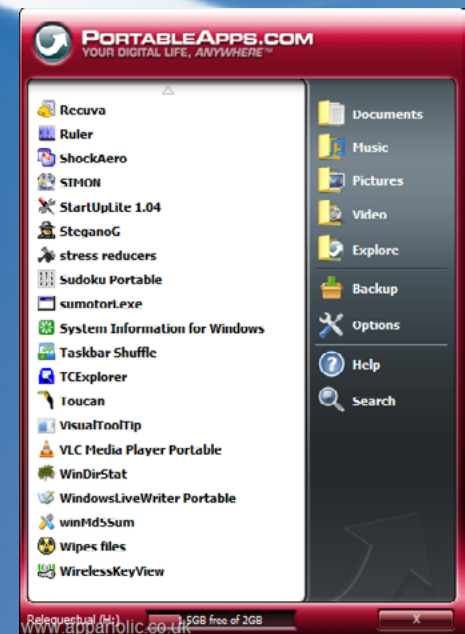
Google Chrome has built a reputation as one of the fastest browsers available on the internet. However, if you take a quick glance at the computers in the New Rizal Library, something becomes painfully obvious – installing software, even lawfully, isn't allowed. So how do you get Chrome on the computers without violating the rules of the library?



The answer is simple: use legal, open source, portable applications.

PortableApps (downloadable from portableapps.com) is an application that allows you to customize your computing experience on the PC's at school by running software on your flash drive without any need for administrative rights. You can download the newest version of your application (like Chrome, for example) and place it on any USB storage device. Afterwards, create a Google account and synchronize the information from your desktop Chrome to your portable Chrome. You could even install extensions like Facebook Photo Zoom to further improve your in-school browsing experience.

Now, you've got a browser with everything you'd probably ever need – including Flash for YouTube, extensions for better browsing,



themes, and even your settings so you don't have to change your preferences – on a flash drive. You can use it in the library or when you're near any desktop with Windows on it!

Think about it: a browser with all your bookmarks and extensions in your pocket? It sounds perfect!

Jaime Anson

RARs in Disguise

Hello, readers! We'll be learning how to send all types of files through image-hosting sites. If you're tired of going through the frustrating process of file-sharing through sites like Megaupload, where people are made to wait for 45 seconds for each download, or Rapidshare where people always happen to be "already downloading" something, you can switch to Photobucket, Imageshack, TinyPic or some other image-hosting site.

Converting a compressed or archived file (.rar or .zip) into an image file (.jpg or .png) is complicated. Although you can easily change file extensions from .jpg to .rar, the file may be considered a RAR file but uploading it as a photo is not possible.

How do you properly hide a file behind an image then?

First, put the files, (a) the compressed file you want to disguise and (b) the image you want to disguise it with, in the same folder. For easier access, it is recommended that you put them in drive C. Next, launch the command prompt. To do this in Windows XP, click the Start button, select

Run, then type 'cmd'. For Windows 7 or Vista, click Start and type 'cmd' in the Search box. From there, navigate to the directory where you placed your files. If you placed them in C:\, type "cd\" to go there. Then, type this:

```
Copy /b fileone.jpg + filetwo.rar newfile.jpg
```

Make sure that it is .jpg + .rar and not .rar + .jpg. You may also use .zip in place of .rar, and .png in place of .jpg. Now, you should be able to see your disguised RAR file in drive C.

On the other hand, changing the converted 'image' file back to a RAR file is much easier. How?

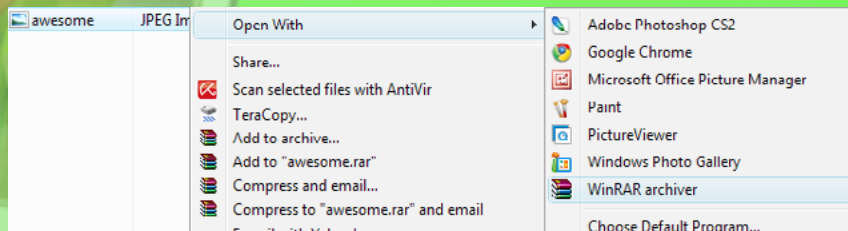
Just download the converted photo, change the file extension to .rar or .zip, and extract the file through WinZIP, WinRAR, or another decompressing program. Sharing is that easy!

Note: Websites like Multiply and Facebook modify disguised RAR files such that when you download the files from them, you'll only get the photo and not the hidden file. To avoid this, use only image-hosting sites.

```
Microsoft Windows [Version 6.0.6000]
Copyright (c) 2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\hp>cd..
C:\Users>cd..

C:\>Copy /b visibleimage.png + hiddenfile.rar awesome.jpg
visibleimage.png
hiddenfile.rar
1 file(s) copied.
```



Ian Yumatiao

Windows Live Office Overview



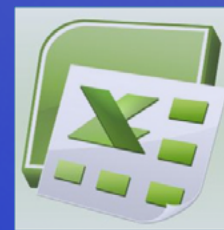
In recent years, formerly offline applications are starting to move into the Internet cloud. Among the more prominent applications moving to the web are office suites, with the widely-known Google Docs at the forefront. Not wanting to be overtaken by these free, web-based alternatives, Microsoft, makers of the widely popular Microsoft Office Suite, has also provided a web-based version of their Office product. Labeled "Windows Live Office", it seeks to provide a free and online alternative to its desktop counterpart. Bundled with the Windows Live service, Windows Live Office covers the more important applications -- Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote. Here is an overview of what you can expect from Microsoft's online Office service.



Online Word is supposed to be an online word processor for making documents. As of this writing, however, Word just lacks too many features to even make a printable essay. There is no line-spacing, no

page-formatting and no online printing. As it is, Online Word feels like an online Notepad plus extra fonts.

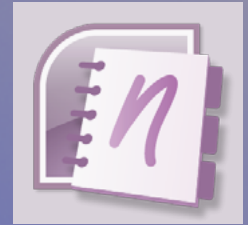
Excel is Microsoft's spreadsheet-creating tool. If you are the kind of person who only uses Excel for filling in cells, and basic formulas, Excel will satisfy only up to that level. Excel lacks some standard features such



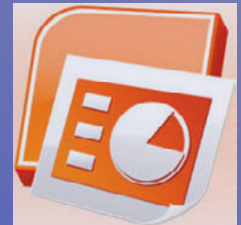
as formatting and cell-merging. It also lacks support for images and graphs. Excel's Live Office Version feels too simple in comparison to its desktop counterpart, which is known for very advanced tools and macros. Still, some will find its basic features sufficient, and support for real-

time collaboration is a definite plus.

OneNote is Microsoft's note-taking software. The online version of OneNote comes with a decent template, and can perform basic note-taking tasks. It also features online collaboration with multiple users, which can be pretty helpful in some situations. Basically, it's a simple application for a simple task, and it does the job.



Powerpoint's slide-show-creating tools have also moved into the Internet cloud. While it does come with some pretty templates, you can only create the simplest slide shows. There are no animations or slide-transitions. The layouts are completely fixed, with unmovable images and text boxes. Don't expect to make these presentations quickly either, as loading times for adding items can be unusually long. Unless you can cope with its rather sluggish performance, you might be better off creating better-looking presentations offline.



The Verdict:

Windows Live Office is a rather disappointing alternative to Google Docs. It is still clearly in a maturing state. It lacks even some basic features already standard in office applications, and it seems obvious that it is still dependent on the offline version of Microsoft Office. While it is acceptable since it is still in the beta stage, it looks like Office is still bound to the desktop for now. Windows Live Office needs a great deal of improvement if it wants to push towards the clouds.

Free & Open Source Games

Kim Lachica

These days, excellent games are released often. They usually boast of advanced game engines, high-quality graphics and audio, and hours of gameplay. However, not everyone can afford to spend so much money on these games and the hardware that they require. Luckily, many developers share their creations with the online community for free, still providing lots of entertainment. Here are a few:

Let's Go Find El Dorado (Alternate name: 'So Long Oregon') is a game that was created for the online gaming competition Ludum Dare. It follows the alternate history of a family travelling the Oregon Trail who decide to search for the lost city of El Dorado instead. Players must try to reach the legendary city of gold with at least a single family member left alive from the attacks of dysentery, typhoid, cholera and other injuries that can be incurred when the wagon lands upside down. Players get to maneuver a wagon through rivers, towns and Indian settlements by balancing, spinning around and jumping from one mountain peak to another. While this game is short and simplistic in style, its high replayability (new environments are generated each game) and humor can provide hours of fun, especially when played with friends.



Let's Go Find El Dorado

download: gamejolt.net

image from fretsonfire.net



Frets on Fire

download: fretsonfire.net

Frets on Fire is an open source game created as an entry to the Assembly 2006 Game Development competition. A PC version of the wildly popular Guitar Hero and Rockband (skins of each game are available), the game is meant to be played by inverting a keyboard and playing it like a guitar, hitting the notes as accurately as possible. The game runs on multiple platforms and also features support for guitar controllers. Since it is open source and is supported by a huge community, hundreds of songs, both official and fan-arranged, are available for free download.

Enviro-Bear 2000: Operation: Hibernation gives the player control over a bear that drives a car. The goal of the game is to gather enough fish and berries before winter arrives. Once the bear is fat enough, the player must drive into a cave and hibernate. All of this is done within the confines of the car – you control the hand of a bear which must press on pedals, turn the steering wheel, bring food to the bear's mouth and throw junk out of the windows. The environment is realistic – leaves and pinecones fall when the car hits trees, rocks fall when it hits boulders, and fish become bones after the bear ingests them. While it is a simple game, Enviro-Bear is capable of providing lots of fun with its whimsical and hilarious gameplay.



Enviro-Bear

download: gamejolt.net

image from wildfire.byimplication.com



Wildfire

download: wildfire.byimplication.com

Wildfire is the winner of this year's Microsoft Imagine Cup tGame Design category. The player takes control of a single unit who tries to save the world by recruiting volunteers and assigning them to work on various tasks. Volunteers can be recruited by the act of oration, an act powered by inspiration. In turn, inspiration increases as you and your volunteers perform tasks. Apart from needing to manage recruits wisely, players must also be wary of black agents who run around the city and try to oppose them by damaging their city health. The wonderful concept of the game (which was inspired by the volunteers who helped rebuild the country after it was hit by the Typhoon Ondoy), along with the minimalist graphics, great sounds and high replayability (each session generates a new city) make this game a must-play.

DID YOU KNOW?

Three of the members of Team By Implication, creators of Wildfire, are CompSAt alumni -- Philip Cheang, Wil Li and Rodz Tan.

Ready, Set, Go!

Wildcard conducted an online survey on Computer Gamers in the Ateneo De Manila University last August 7. The survey aimed to determine what is current and popular in the realm of computer gaming. Seventy-five college students responded to the survey -- 5 freshmen, 53 sophomores, 11 juniors, and 6 seniors. Here are the results:

OUT OF ALL THE RESPONDENTS,

48% WERE MALE
52% WERE FEMALE

77% PLAY COMPUTER GAMES 

2% COMPSAT MEMBER ONLY
35% COMPSAT MEMBER AND CS STUDENT
63% NEITHER

60% PLAY 1-2 DAYS EVERY WEEK
19% 3-4 DAYS
17% 5-6 DAYS
4% EVERYDAY

MOST IMPORTANT GAME ELEMENTS:

- 1** GRAPHICS & GAME ENVIRONMENT
- 2** TIE: STORYLINE & INTERACTION LEVEL
- 3** TIE: PRICE & GAME CONTROLS
- 4** AUDIO & SOUND EFFECTS

42% PLAY FOR 2-3 HOURS EACH DAY
27% 1 HOUR
14% 15 MINUTES
9% 30 MINUTES
7% 5-10 HOURS
1% MORE THAN 12 HOURS

GENRE POPULARITY

- 1. Strategic**
- 2. Simulation Educational**
- 3. RPG Action/Adventure Shooting**
- 4. Puzzle**

The last item on the survey asked for specific names of respondents' highly favored games. They were asked to include the reasons why they would recommend these games.

Respondent #5 said: "Every game in the Final Fantasy Series (especially Final Fantasy IX). Excellent plot. Well-developed installments in the series, captivating graphics."



image from videogamesblogger.com

Respondent #20 said: "Ragnarok Online (private servers), Final Fantasy and Suikoden Series are my favorites. A general reason is that they are very medieval and very historical. (Another reason is that they're) coupled with fantasy, magic, adventure and quests. (They have) battle systems that are easy enough to understand and are relatively easy to use. More so, there's a story that you're trying to unravel and (you get a) sense of fulfillment after every quest or mini-quest."



image from mmosite.com

Respondent #33 said: "A tie between Harvest Moon and Pokemon :D Because even though these two games can be somehow repetitive, there's something in them that just makes me want to keep playing until I reach the top!"



image from thewiids.co.uk

Most respondents picked Defentse of the Ancients (more commonly known as "DoTA"), a Warcraft III map, as their favorite game.



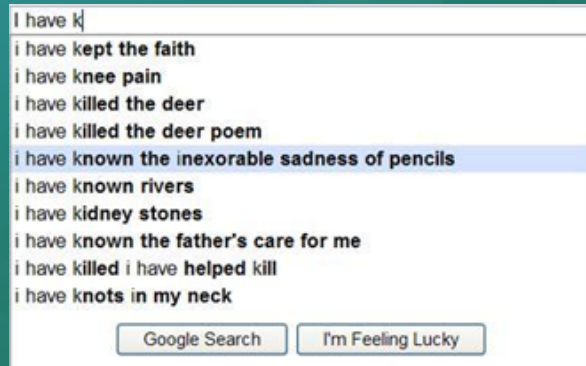
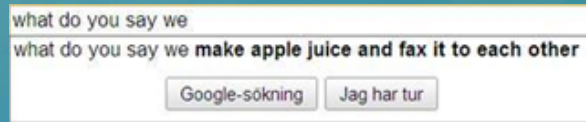
image from gamingedge.com

Respondents say they picked the game because it's fun, focuses on interaction between players (teamwork) and personal decisions, involves strategy, and is constantly updated by its development team which keeps players interested.

Fun Page

Have you ever experienced the sheer joy of typing the beginning of a sentence in Google and seeing what Google predicts you are about to ask? Here are a few particular amusing ones.

Credits to autocomplete.me for the images.



Did You Know?

compiled by Daryl Saavedra

"Stewardesses" is the longest word that can be typed with only the left hand.

The first computer mouse was invented by Doug Engelbart in 1964 and was made of wood.

The first domain name ever registered was Symbolics.com.

Toy Story was the first feature film to be entirely computer-animated.

Upcoming Events

exciting CompSAT projects to look forward to

/IT & IUPC (November 13)

This event is a combination of two of CompSAT's famous interschool competitions. It is a whole-day event consisting of an IT quiz bee for high school students and a programming competition for college students.

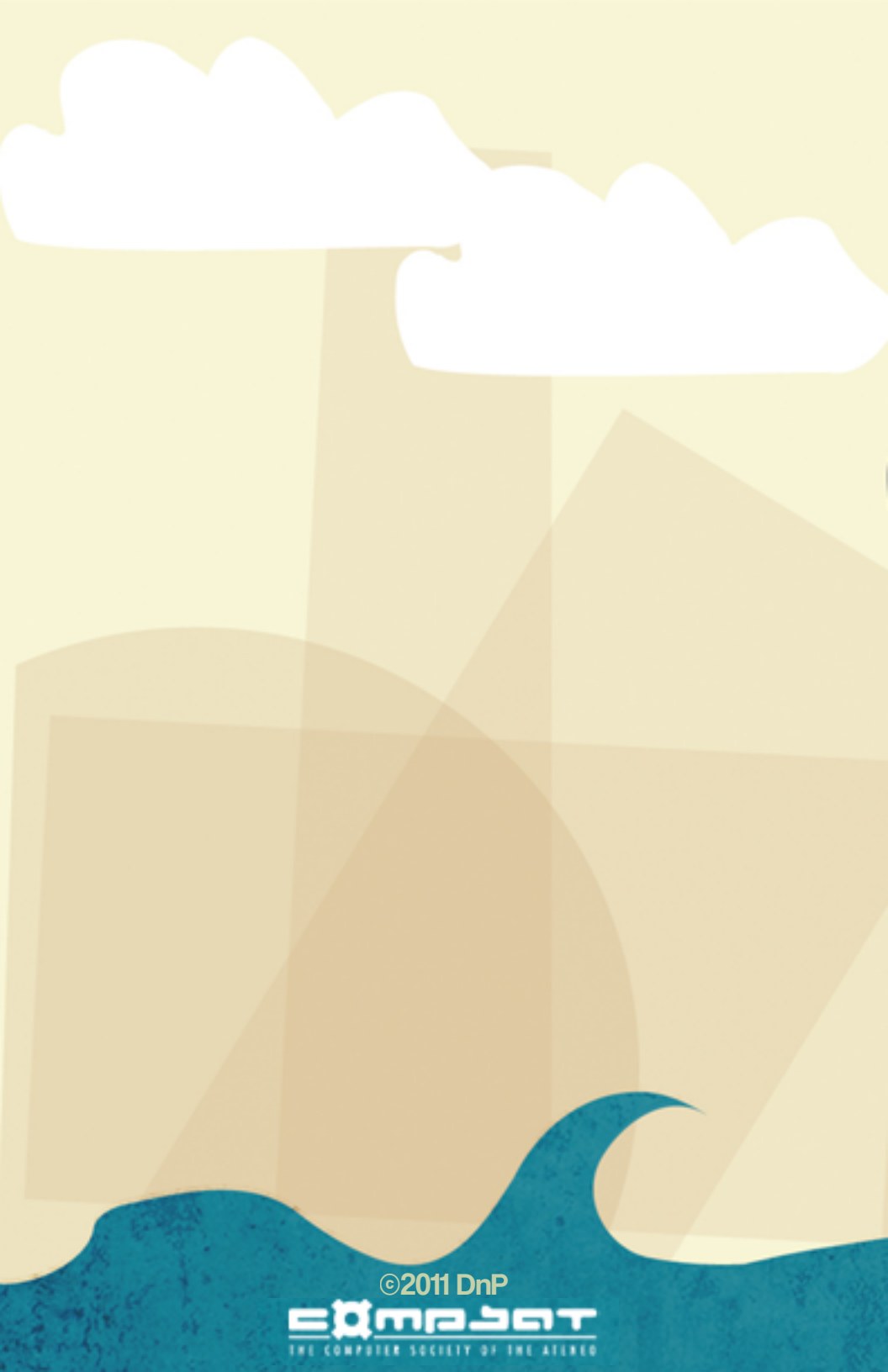
ROFL (November 8- December 3)

CompSAT's official raffle will be open to the entire Atenean community. Prizes in the form of technological gadgets will be given away!

CompSAT Week (November 30-December 3)

CompSAT's annual event will showcase the best that the organization has to offer. Watch out for the second Burnfest where copies of Windows 7 and open source applications will be given away, the second Geek Shirt Design Sale (with brand new designs), the Interactive Multimedia Exhibit, which will showcase different forms of electronic media as well as creations developed by CompSAT members, IT Forums 3 and Company Talks, where companies will be invited to give a talk to interested members of the organization who are seeking job and internship opportunities.





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