

THE COMPUTER CORNER

## **No. 151. Teamviewer, Microsoft Security Essentials and Glary Utilities**

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Not long ago, my wife Nancy and I went to Parker, Colorado (near Denver) to visit one of her sons. I did some work on his computer, and then used it to check my email. That's no big deal, but what I did next is. I logged on to my Winlink 2000 computer desktop at home, checked the mail and even answered two messages that were in my inbox. How did I do that? Using another amazing free program called Teamviewer.

I have written about Remote Control Pro, which covers your desktop with the desktop of any computer on your home network so that you can control it. However, to access any computer outside of your local home network, you need additional software to tunnel through the Internet. Teamviewer requires nothing additional. Here is how it works.

You install Teamviewer on your local machine. Then you use it to send a little program and invitation to a remote computer, anywhere in the world. If the owner of the remote computer agrees and runs the little program, he is presented with a code (really a unique address, in the format 111 222 333) and a random password. He may change the password to whatever he wishes. The owner then informs you of his address code and password. You then type in the remote computer's unique address code and the password in your copy of Teamviewer, and suddenly your desktop is covered with the remote desktop. You can do anything at that point. Run programs, add or delete files, send files from your machine to the remote unit, even reboot the computer or shut it down completely. Moreover, if you reboot the remote computer, Teamviewer gives you control even before Windows is up and running fully. You know that log on screen in XP? You can even control that. Needless to say, I use it periodically to make sure the Colorado machine is up to snuff and running correctly.

The company (in Germany) simply has a database of all of the addresses (one of which they provide to you when you use the program). When you request connection to the remote computer, the request goes to the Teamviewer servers, which look up the correct address and connect you (after you have entered the correct password). Typically it connects in about 3 seconds. They provide this service for companies all over the world (for a fee), using the highest security methods to keep stuff safe, and they have decided to make it free for non-commercial use.

Here is a success story using Teamviewer. Another of my wife's sons who lives here in Wisconsin is really not very computer savvy. He does OK, but often runs into trouble. I put Teamviewer on his machine. Recently, he called me because he was having difficulty in transferring some of his files from his old machine (burned to a CD) in the proper place in the new machine. I activated my copy of Teamviewer, and suddenly his desktop appeared on my machine, 30 miles from his. Both of us had control of his desktop! Using Explorer, I clicked our way into his E: drive, created a new folder named Pictures, then opened the CD with another copy of Explorer and dragged the files and folders to Pictures. Then I closed the CD and told him to take it out of his machine, which he did. He could see my cursor as I worked and as I explained what I was doing on the phone, so he learned by seeing his own desktop and hearing what I said. He now knows how to do that particular task, and learned it in a very short time. What a problem solver, and I didn't have to drive 30 miles!

Another example. One of my friends has a Winlink station out in his unheated barn, quite a way from his house. I helped him to set up Teamviewer to control that station from the comfort of his home office. That has been a lifesaver when the outside temperature drops to below zero! Yet another example: Jim Darrow (KB9MMC), ARES Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator for Digital Communications in our state, now uses it to connect to and tweak a number of Winlink stations around the state, as a service to help folks keep their stations up to snuff. It is simple, secure and it works. What a program! Danke schoen, Teamviewer!

You can get Teamviewer from <http://www.teamviewer.com>, or from my favorite software site, <http://www.majorgeeks.com>. Teamviewer communicates with ease over firewall barriers and proxies, via the Internet, to give ad-hoc remote support to colleagues and friends. You can even use it for online presentations or collaborations. Are two of you giving a talk at a radio club in the future? How about using Teamviewer to collaborate

on-line to build the PowerPoint presentation? This is another software package that meets a need in modern computing, and it has caught on. Over 15 million copies are in use at present. It works with all versions of Windows up through Windows 7. The many corporations that pay for its use make it possible for the company to make it free for home use. What a gem!

On another important topic, Microsoft, a company we all know doesn't get it right very often, has gotten it right again. They have a new (free) program out, called **Microsoft Security Essentials**. It is an antivirus and antispyware program rolled into one. I surmise they feel an obligation to the huge numbers of Windows users to help them with virus and spyware security. At any rate, it is wonderful. Not only is it free, it is a snap to download and install, with the only initial virus scan taking any time (just a very few minutes). The important thing is that it is never in your face (unless a virus or spyware program is detected). Furthermore, it downloads and installs updates and scans your computer in the background automatically. It doesn't seem to use a lot of computer resources, either – no slowing down of your machine when it is working. The word on the street is that while it is not the best in the world, it is quite good and more than adequate for the average user. I have put it on all my XP and Windows 7 machines and it is fine. The price (free), coupled with better than adequate performance and a “not in your face all the time” design make it a winner. Goodbye Norton! Goodbye McAfee! (Ugh!) No more annual fees to pay for security. No need to have separate antivirus and antispyware programs running on your machine. This does it all. Highly recommended. One caveat. Go get the installation program and download it to your desktop (do a Google search on Microsoft Security Essentials). Then remove (uninstall, using the Add/Remove Programs icon in your Control Panel) any antivirus and antispyware software on your machine. Reboot, and then install the Microsoft program. Why this sequence? You can never have more than one antivirus program running at a time, without adverse consequences. Install it correctly.

I am constantly amazed at the amount and quality of totally free software that is out there! Another winner that I have come across is **Glary Utilities** ([www.glaryutilities.com](http://www.glaryutilities.com)). But, let me first give some background.

My all time favorite freeware program is **Ccleaner** ([www.ccleaner.com](http://www.ccleaner.com)). (The current name Ccleaner is their shortened and politically more correct name for its original Crap Cleaner moniker). When emptying the recycle bin, I right click the bin icon and select Run Ccleaner. That is a lot faster than clicking the recycle bin icon and having to confirm with another mouse click to dump the contents, and then wait and wait and wait for Microsoft's software to empty the bin. And when I want to do a quick cleanup of the Registry, I right click the Recycle Bin icon and select Open Ccleaner, and the program pops up. First, I click on Run Cleaner to empty the recycle bin, then a click on Registry and Scan for Issues. In just a couple of seconds, all the issues are listed, and a click on Fix Selected Issues cleans up the problems. This program is a wonderful way to clean things up quickly in a very short time. It is so easy that one can do it routinely, between other computer tasks. That is why Ccleaner has caught on worldwide. Over 300 million copies have been downloaded to date! That number tells you something.

But every program has its limitations, and Ccleaner does miss a few entries in the Registry that can and should be deleted. And, as is the nature of Windows (any version), more bad entries accumulate constantly. Glary Utilities seems to do a more thorough job of identifying and cleaning useless entries in the Registry, so I have begun using it from time to time, in place of Ccleaner, to scrub the Registry. Its “One-Click Maintenance” button checks for Registry errors, shortcut errors, dangerous entries in the Startup menu, cleans temporary files, erases tracks and checks for spyware (but it is not a substitute for a stand-alone spyware-killing program). It finds all those items, and will show you what they are and where they are, should you wish it. Then a one-click “Repair Problems” fixes the issues. There are other options with the program, such as optimizing Internet speed and encrypting confidential files, to name just two. But the cleaning functions alone make it worthwhile to download and install. For novices, everything can be done with one or two clicks, while power users have lots of options and tweaking tools at hand. Highly recommended. By the way, you can get it and Ccleaner from [www.majorgeeks.com](http://www.majorgeeks.com), the best site in the world for safe freeware and shareware. Happy Computing!