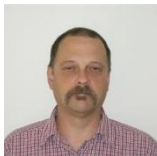


Newsletter

**DOOM SCROLLING - PHISHING BY KEN - START THE DAY STRONG -
THE MIGHTY MOUSE CLICKER - THE NEW CAREER AGE LIMIT**

Stop the Doom Scrolling!



While our smart phones can be great tools for managing our lives allowing us to do things like coordinating with family and friends through text messages, doing on-line banking and bill paying, quickly finding answers to our questions, and so forth, they can also be real time wasters. Whether it's keeping up with the latest news on social media platforms, learning the latest dance trend on Tik Tok, or collecting upvotes on comments posted to X, the time we while away on these activities is time we could be spending elsewhere, like learning a new skill or engaging with other people. I'm certainly no luddite, but I would argue that our use of technology should be intentional, not habitual. The trouble is that the technology companies pay big money to people whose job it is to discourage mindfulness and keep our eyes glued to the screen for as long as possible. Well, fear not, fair readers. We can regain some control over our lives and fight back against those who would use our basic human needs against us by making some adjustments in how we use technology. Humans are wired to pay more attention to certain features in the environment. Things that are novel (new), that move, that are certain colors will grab our attention quickly. Red, for example, a color that is used to signal danger across many cultures. The engineers designing the apps we use take advantage of this hardwiring to keep our eyeballs on the screen. You will notice in the screenshot below that the icons for the App Store, Phone, and Mail all have a red icon. While this red doesn't signal danger, the engineers have hijacked our hardwiring to grab our attention.

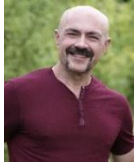


I tried a little experiment on myself just to see what happens when I make the screen less visually appealing. As you will see in the screen above, the version on the right is monochromatic. It's grey and very boring to look at. I changed my screen to this and after about a week checked my usage. Overall, I spent about 30% less time looking at my phone. I think this is a good outcome that allowed me to reclaim my time for other uses. If you would like to try this yourself, and you have an iPhone, here are the steps you need to take to make this little change and maybe regain time for yourself:

1. Open the Settings app.
2. Select Accessibility.
3. Under Vision, tap on Display & Text Size.
4. Go into Color Filters.
5. Toggle on Color Filters.
6. Choose Grayscale from the options.
7. Adjust the intensity of the color filter by dragging the slider at the bottom.

Give it a try and let us know if this worked for you.

Finishing the Day Strong To Start the Day Strong



Tech managers often focus on planning the day *before* we start — setting calendars, prioritizing tickets, organizing sprints. But one habit we don't talk about enough is how we end our day. The way you close out your work hours directly impacts how quickly and effectively you begin the next.

Research shows that physical and digital clutter makes it harder to focus and increases distractions, slowing down our ability to process information and concentrate on tasks. Leaving your desk messy with half-done work or open tabs competes for attention — even the next day — and undermines productivity.

A structured shutdown routine — a series of small actions at the end of the workday — does more keep your desk clean: it helps your brain create *closure* and reduces the cognitive load that comes from unfinished tasks. Psychologists call this the end-of-day shutdown ritual, and it has been shown to ease stress, boost productivity, and make the morning restart smoother.

Here's a simple version of that routine you can apply today:

- Clear your workspace: Close out unneeded apps, organize files, and physically put tools away. A decluttered desk sends a clear signal to your brain that work is done here.
- Review accomplishments: Take a minute to acknowledge what you *did* complete — that sense of progress fuels motivation.
- Plan tomorrow's priorities: Write out the first few key tasks you'll tackle next. Studies show that pre-planning reduces *morning friction* and lets you start immediately with focus and purpose.
- Organize emails and notes: Sort the inbox, flag or draft messages to send first thing in the morning, and tag tickets that need follow-up so nothing is left floating in your head.

Taking 5–10 minutes at the end of your day to structure tomorrow will save *far more time* than the cost of disorganization. Small routines become habits, and habits bring clarity and consistency — two things every IT team thrives on.

Happy February! ❄️

As we move into the new year, please remember to stay alert and aware of any issues your PC may experience.



How Your Mouse Clicks Work

When you click your mouse, you're giving the computer an instruction. Each click sends a tiny message (a *command*) to your PC that says something like, "Hey, the user clicked here—do whatever this spot is supposed to do."

The computer then checks what you clicked on (a button, a file, or a link) and performs the appropriate action—opening something, selecting it, or starting a task.

Sometimes it may take a few seconds for your PC to respond. If you get overly impatient and click repeatedly, it can cause performance issues or unexpected behavior. A little patience goes a long way. 😊

Security Tips

Watch out for "New Year" phishing emails. Scammers love this time of year and often send messages about:

- Updated benefits
- Fake invoices
- Password reset requests
- "Urgent" account notices

If something looks suspicious, don't click—report it to IT right away.

Did You Know?

- 🐛 The first computer bug was an actual bug
In 1947, a moth got stuck in the Harvard Mark II computer. That's where the term *debugging* comes from.
- 💾 The first 1GB hard drive weighed over 500 pounds
Released by IBM in 1980. Today, your phone has more storage and fits in your pocket
As always, if you need help, have questions, or just want to say hi, reach out to the IT department . We're friendly—we promise.

A New Career at Any Age



Many people find that they have different interests and strengths as they grow older, which can lead to exciting opportunities, even within the same organization.

In fact, starting a new career can bring fresh challenges and the chance to learn new skills. Whether you're looking to follow a passion, earn more money, or simply want a change or more of a challenge, age should not hold you back.

With strong determination and the right mindset. Anyone can successfully begin a new job or career, no matter how old you are. It's never too late to start over and age really is just a number these days.

A personal note: "Starting a new career at any age can be a difficult decision especially going into a unknown field but it's never too late to pursue something new or another career you have a vast interest in, like computers. Four years ago, I started a new career within the same company as an IT Tech, it was a very difficult decision after driving a bus for sixteen years. Was it a good choice? Yes but also one of the hardest but yet rewarding choices I've ever made. It's a nice change of pace and contributing something to a larger degree when helping out other employees as well as disabled people, plus my day goes by much faster".

Editor - Phil Ellsworth pellsworth@saratogabridges.org

Navigating Microsoft Office



Knowing what you want and how to get there. Navigating Microsoft Office, One step at a time.

This month, we will take a look at Email Signatures.

What do you Want?

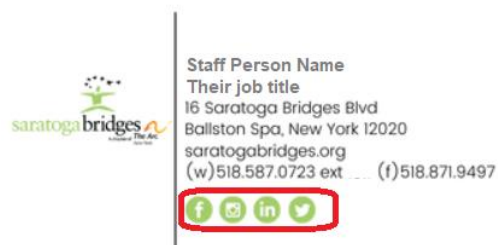
Having an effective signature means that your intended receiver will know who you are and how to contact you. Lets start off with Font. This includes size, color and most importantly letter choice. Your signature should have a clean easy on the eyes appearance for all intended receivers.

A good signature will have Your name , Your job title, Place of work, Your full work address, Office number with extension (if you have one), Fax number (if you have one). It may even have one or all of the following: Our Saratoga Bridges logo, website URL, and any social media profiles associated with Saratoga Bridges.

*** Note** - For our logo, be sure to use the correct size image (around 32 KB or less).

Sometimes , (like Sgt. Friday in Dragnet would say "just the facts Ma'am") plain, simple and precise, is all you need.

A signature that is an image and NOT an actual textual signature, could cause some confusion. Although it may look very nice and clean, especially if it has our logo and shortcuts to our Saratoga Bridges Social Media sites, it is actually nonfunctional. Today's user is trained to click and go. If you were to attempt to click on any one of the shortcut icons on the bottom of this signature, you would get the option to open the picture using one of your purchased photo applications or it would just open using Microsoft's photo viewer. This will NOT take you to the websites that you thought you were interested in.



Here is an
Example
of an
effective
signature:

Staff Name
Job Title
Saratoga Bridges
16 Saratoga Bridges
Blvd
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
518-587-0723 XT: XXXX
www.saratogabridges.or

How to Get There:

How to create your signature in 6 steps or less

If you have "Outlook (classic)"

Use this method to navigate to the Signature tool

Open Outlook>File>Options> Mail>Signatures

If you are using the current version of Outlook,

Use this method to navigate to the Signature tool

Open Outlook>View>View Settings> Accounts> Signatures

***Note** Once you have a signature created, you can quickly and simply make changes to your signature, by doing the following:

Outlook>New>Message> Signature> Signatures

Did you know ?

Using a created signature saves you time. A full signature (which includes Your name , Your job title, Place of work, Your full work address, Office number with extension (if you have one), Fax number(if you have one)) on average takes roughly 1 minute and 40

Phishing: Don't Be the Next Big Catch



Phishing utilizes social engineering to convince you to give up your sensitive information willingly using any avenue they can think of. Attackers who are trying to get your information via Phishing will make their efforts look as real and trustworthy as possible. Imagine them as modern-day Con-Artists.

If you receive an unexpected Call, Email, text message asking to verify or change your credentials to any account, do not respond to the message itself. Do not click on any links sent to you. If you are being asked to change your password navigate to the accounts site and change it from there. If you are receiving an unexpected call from your bank, tell them you will call them back and call the bank yourself with the number they have publicly facing.

When in doubt go to the source to make changes or verify information.

The Funny Page









Possible Future Topics: PC Game RIGS, **The Joker**, Stuck Inside, **More from the Stickler**, What about ChatBots, **Working Orders**, Bigger Monitor with New PCs, and much much more..

Send comments to: The Editor - Phil Ellsworth pellsworth@saratogabridges.org