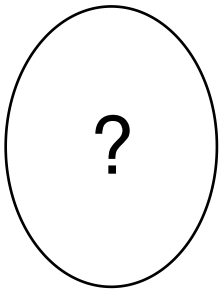
The next meeting was on the 13th October, and thanks for coming along to support your club

As usual, our meeting will start with a 'problem solving' session where members can help others with advice and suggestions on their day to day problems. Many problems require research to present practical solutions and for this reason you should describe the problem including details of the computer, memory and operating system in an email to editor@hobartpcgroup.org.au Any solutions found will be included in the next newsletter or at the next meeting, particularly if a more visual explanation is needed.

Presidents Message.....



We are without a President elect this month

Membership Drive

As always we are trying to increase membership of our Group. If you introduce a new member you can have the option of having your Annual Subscription waived for the year.

JOIN THE HOBART COMPUTER USERS CLUB AND IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS

CONTENTS

News Bytes

Koto smart sensors could help you improve your indoor environment

by Pulkit Chandna TechHive

Koto Labs' Cubesensors aim to help you ensure your smart home is also a healthy home.

The company recently launched an Indiegogo campaign to help fund the initial production run of a new generation of its indoor environment monitoring devices: the $99 Koto Blink, the $149 Koto Air, and the $199 Koto Storm.

Each cube provides easy-to-digest insights into your indoor surroundings, notifying you whenever any of the onboard sensors detect unwholesome ambient conditions and, more importantly, suggests possible remedies (e.g., opening a window to bring in fresh air) based on those readings.

The Koto Blink has sensors for monitoring temperature, humidity, light, and noise. It packs enough built-in storage to preserve two weeks' worth of readings. It is the only model to have a rechargeable battery, which, according to the company, is likely to require recharging only once every six months. For connectivity, this two-inch smart cube has Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) and ZigBee radios.

The Koto Air has the same temperature, humidity, light, and noise sensors found in its entry-level cousin, plus the ability to sniff out

dust and air pollution, such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Save for the two additional sensors and its dependence on a power supply, the Koto Air is identical to the Koto Blink in all other regards. It has the same amount of onboard storage and the same Bluetooth and Zigbee radios. The two even share a major limitation in that they can only sync data with your iOS/Android phone using Bluetooth only, versus the cloud (which would allow you to access the data when you're away from home).

That's where the Koto Storm comes in. The only

model with Wi-Fi, it's meant to act as a sort of a hub for the other two Koto sensors, allowing them to log onto the Internet and provide you with updates even when you're not at home. That doesn't mean this model is a slouch in the sensor department, though. It packs the ability to monitor temperature, humidity, light, noise and barometric pressure, as well as the ability to detect approaching storms (to which it owes its name).

You can pre-order the Koto sensors at deeply discounted prices from Indiegogo for delivery in March 2016. As of press time, the Slovenian company had raised more than $30,000 toward its $50,000 funding goal, with 17 days to go. This is a "flexible funding" campaign, which means the company will collect whatever funds are pledged, whether it reaches its goal or not.

Why this matters: While these new devices are a lot like the sensor-packed smart "Cube" the company has been selling since January 2014, there are a couple of key differences. First, whereas their predecessor is limited to a single model, the Koto sensors come in three different flavors, each possessing a different set of capabilities. This is significant as you can now choose just the combination of sensors you believe would be best for your particular use case. Second, an additional "base station" or hub is no longer an absolute must as each of the three models can sync data directly with your

smartphone over Bluetooth. And it helps greatly that the base station that's on offer here is its own monitoring device.

Owners of the company's first-gen Cube sensors will be happy to know that the devices in the Koto family are compatible with their existing setups. They can, for instance, use a first-generation base station to sync readings from a Koto Blink or Air to the cloud. Likewise, the Koto Storm can be used to extend an existing network of Cube sensors. Another thing to look forward to is the upcoming launch of the Koto IFTTT (If This Then That) channel, which will enable both current- and next-generation devices to directly pass on instructions to programmable thermostats, smart lighting, and other connected devices.

HP and SanDisk join forces to create storage 1000x faster than NAND flash

The new storage technology aims to be 1,000 times faster than flash, and will compete with similar tech from Intel and Micron.

HP and SanDisk join forces to create storage 1000x faster than NAND flash

by Jared Newman for PCWorld and TechHive

The new storage technology aims to be 1,000 times faster than flash, and will compete with similar tech from Intel and Micron.

HP and SanDisk are plotting new storage technology that could be 1,000 times faster than flash memory, though they'll face some competition along the way.

Details on the new technology are scarce, but the goal is to create a "universal memory" that serves as both long-term storage and RAM, the Wall Street Journal reports. The goal is to commercialize this technology some time between 2018 and 2020.

Why this matters: Today's computers offer RAM and storage separately, because the former is much more expensive and purges its data when the machine powers down. Programs and files are stored on flash memory, but during use they'll load some data into RAM for faster short-term access. A single type of memory for both short- and long-term storage could boost a PC's performance dramatically.

Intel, Micron, and a manufacturing shift

HP and SanDisk aren't the only ones with eyes on next-generation memory. Earlier this year, Intel and Micron announced a partnership on a new type of storage, touting the same "1,000 times" performance improvements. Originally dubbed 3D XPoint, the technology will commercially be known as Intel Optane, and is scheduled to hit the market in 2016—well ahead of HP and SanDisk.

The two companies aren't just looking at servers, which are often the first stop for new storage technology. Intel aims to have Optane in laptops next year as well, and is introducing storage controllers, interfaces, and interconnects to help make it happen. HP and SanDisk are also collaborating on computer systems that use their storage technology.

The Wall Street Journal's report sheds some light on why the companies may be entering such fierce competition in the first place: Neither Intel/Micron nor HP/SanDisk plan to license their technology, which means you won't see it on products from Seagate, Samsung or other storage vendors.

The licensing model typically ends with vendors racing to the bottom on pricing, but apparently that won't be the case with this technology. In other words, expect to pay a premium for those faster speeds, unless (or until) another entity comes up with something similar that all vendors can use.

Google's OnHub turns out to be part router, part Chromium OS computer

by Jared Newman PCWorld

While Google cheerily advertises the 13 antennas packed into its new OnHub router, the company's been less forthcoming about the software under the hood.

Now that some hackers have rooted the high-tech Wi-Fi router, we have some clarity: OnHub appears to run a heavily-modified version of Chromium OS, the same browser-based software that powers Chromebook laptops and Chromebox desktops.

The root method for OnHub first appeared on Exploitee.rs. It turns out that the router's underside contains a hidden switch underneath one of its screws. This switch can boot OnHub into developer mode if you enter a specific keystroke, using a keyboard plugged into the router's USB port. That keystroke is Ctrl + D, which is precisely what you'd use to enter developer mode in Chromium OS.

"The Google OnHub is at heart a Chromebook without a screen modified as a router, and our root method is just a modified version of booting Developer Mode," Exploitee.rs wrote. The group has now posted detailed OnHub rooting instructions for those brave enough to try it themselves.

Why this matters: Google's router is designed for novices instead of enthusiasts. Its sole USB port is good for nothing except restoring system images, and its Trusted Platform Module prevents the installation of alternative firmware. Now that the root method is public, we could see some additional uses open up—albeit at the expense of security. And who knows? Maybe you'll soon be able to repurpose OnHub as a cheap Chrome OS desktop if you tire of its usefulness as a Wi-Fi access point.

Acer reveals all-in-one Windows 10 PC with 5 hour battery backup

The Taiwanese company also launched a convertible notebook as parts of its Windows 10 lineup.

For users inclined to carry their desktops around the house, Acer has unveiled a light-weight, all-in-one PC that offers 5 hours built-in battery backup.

The launch of the Aspire Z3-700 all-in-one was part of an event on Monday in Taipei at which the company debuted two devices including a convertible notebook, the Aspire R 14, built around Microsoft's new Windows 10 operating system and technologies such as the Cortana personal assistant, the Microsoft

Edge browser and Continuum that lets Windows phones dock to a large display, keyboard and mouse.

Built around Pentium or Celeron processors and featuring up to 8GB of DDR3L system memory and an option of SSD or HDD storage, the 17.3-inch Aspire Z3-700 has a 15.6 millimeters chassis and weighs 2 kilograms, according to Acer. It has a full HD (1920 x 1080) 10-point capacitive multi-touch screen, which also supports a stylus. A couple of kick stands allow it stay erect or recline flat like "a jumbo tablet," Acer said.

The company did not specify the pricing or availability in North America of the new all-in-one, though it said the device would ship in EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) by the end of the year for 599 euros ($680)

Acer's immediate focus is on rolling out its Aspire R 14, which will be available in North America later this month at prices starting at $699. The R 14 will also ship in EMEA this month though it is to be priced higher at 799

euros and above.

18.5 mm thin and weighing 1.9 kg, the convertible runs on 6th generation Intel Core processors, and has up to 8GB DDR3L system memory and SSD storage. It also offers MU-MIMO for faster downloads than 802.11ac products. The "multiuser multiple input, multiple output" wireless technology lets wireless routers transmit to and receive data from multiple Wi-Fi devices at the same time.

The convertible's keyboard can be used in the usual laptop mode or can switch to a "display mode" by placing the keyboard behind the screen to make a tent or laying it flat under the display.

Both devices provide audio with immersive sound with Acer's True Harmony Plus technology with Dolby Audio. They also offer four modes to control blue-light emission from the screen and reduce eyestrain, using Acer's BluelightShield.

The Taiwanese company also demonstrated the Liquid Jade Primo smartphone, first revealed at IFA 2015, which is a 5.5-inch smartphone which uses Microsoft's Continuum technology to give users a PC-like experience on Windows 10 universal apps, when the phone is connected to a secondary display.

Acer also announced Monday cuts in the prices of some of its earlier models, if purchased before Oct. 18, ranging from $100 to 200.

Why Continuum could draw customers from Apple and Android to Windows 10 mobile

by Tony Ibrahim PC World

Lately I've been hearing the call of the Siren, luring me away from my camps at iOS and Android, towards the reimagined Windows 10 mobile.

It began a few weeks ago when I installed Windows 10 on my four year old notebook. "Anyone running Windows 7 onwards can upgrade for free", said Microsoft. And so I did.

The differences were vast and welcomed. Windows 8 suffered from a dangerous bout of split personality. Microsoft coated it with a touch-friendly overlay that ran skin deep. It was conflicted, torn between the familiarity of

a cursor and the promise of a touchscreen. Describing it as a "work in progress" would be kind.

Using the operating system today reveals why Microsoft skipped 9 and went straight to Windows 10. It feels cohesive from the ground up. Touch plays a prominent role because it has been hardwired into Windows' DNA. The design is consistent, from the use of a third-party app right down to the resurrected Start button.

I gravitated towards a part of Windows I had never used before. Aesthetic applications can be downloaded from the Windows Store. Apps add little value to a stand alone PC, but Microsoft is hell bent on having Windows 10 run on devices with a variety of screen sizes; hybrids, tablets, smartphones, wearables, televisions.

In the lead up to Microsoft's Devices event, I downloaded Windows 10 Mobile, specifically the Insider preview version on a Nokia Lumia 930. The call of the Siren grew.

Many redundancies perverted Windows Phone following Microsoft's acquisition of Nokia. Nokia had its own camera app, own music service, own app store. Like Windows 8, Windows Phone was an amalgam of two distinct identities.

Making matters worse was the fact the mobile OS worked in isolation of the computer OS. It looked different, had its own apps and a fragmented language of gestures. The settings menu on Windows Phone looked

nothing like Windows' control panel; it had more in common with Android.
It was a different Microsoft under then chief executive Steve Ballmer. Mobile users would have to use a Windows Phone device if they wanted Microsoft's Office software, at a time when the vast majority relied on iPads or Galaxy smartphones. Microsoft was using its software as currency, hoping customers would stay loyal to its Office suite, when in reality, they left it floating in the water.

Change followed the appointment of chief executive Satya Nadella, a man who hailed from Microsoft's Cloud and Enterprise group. "Mobile first, Cloud first" is his mantra. Nadella's philosophy is to have Microsoft's software run on the screen of any device, whether it wears Microsoft, Apple or Android. Type "Microsoft" in Google's Play store and the first 66 results are apps developed by the company.

Windows 10 Mobile has since matured. Go to the settings menu on a Windows 10 smartphone and what populates is the control panel on a Windows PC. Swipe down the notification blind and presented are the icons found on a Windows 10 notebook. It is the same, only it now sits on desks and in pockets.

One-hundred-and-ten-million devices run Windows 10, and any owner of such a device already has one foot in the door for Windows mobile. The app store is a cornerstone of Microsoft's computing environment and the same apps from the same store are made available to its mobile users.

And yet the app store remains in its infancy. There are fewer games and fewer apps, which means Windows users will be left wanting. Promise is present as developers invest in Windows 10, and subsequently, Windows 10 mobile. But that takes time, and although Microsoft's mobile software is a comprehensive stand-alone solution, it remains hindered by its lack of application support.

Microsoft's event was streamed at 1am Australian Eastern Standard Time. I sat behind my old notebook, tired, waiting for it to start. An hour into the event I heard the Siren's call, this time it was louder, building up to a climactic note.

Hacking adequate application support would be a fair trade for one killer feature. The kind Apple and Google have yet to offer. Microsoft calls it Continuum.

An enthusiastic Bryan Roper, marketing manager at Microsoft, took to the stage for a demonstration. He plugged his Microsoft Lumia 950XL into a dock the size of a wallet. Plugged into the dock was a keyboard, mouse and a monitor.

Continuum treated the smartphone as a processor computing the kind of experience found on a Windows 10 PC. Microsoft's apps universally work across devices. The smartphone's applications reformatted to suit the display of a large screen monitor.

"What you're seeing looks like a Windows 10 desktop, doesn't it? This is my phone", said Roper. "I'm going to keep hammering that back on ya: this is my phone pushing this experience."

Roper guided the cursor to Word, double clicked and began typing using the keyboard.

"Remember, this is the Word universal mobile app. It's now scaling to look great on the [monitor] and all of the functionality you expect is there.

"Even though my phone is powering this, I can use all of the keyboard shortcuts I'm familiar with.

"My actual phone experience is not broken while I'm utilising the desktop experience of Continuum. And neither is the one here [on the computer]. Each experience is independent and uninterrupted.

"But the phone is powering this whole thing. That's the power of a universal app in action. This app doesn't care what screen it is. It just adapts in real time and looks great.

The promise of Continuum is a draw card for Microsoft. Suddenly it is possible to perform work tasks on a mobile as quick as you would on a computer. A makeshift PC can be formed from nothing more than peripherals and a

Windows 10 smartphone. No need to buy separate software, no need to by a dedicated PC tower. Microsoft's ecosystem is coming full circle, with its smartphones, tablets, notebooks and PCs being tethered together with a single operating system.

The event closed with applause, cheering and a standing ovation. This was the sound of the Sirens. And it was heard.

Features

ESET Smart Security 8 All in one protection for your digital lifestyle

Since most of our computing life is spent online these days, it's imperative that we are protected as much as possible from threats that can perform malicious damage to our systems. And not only that, we need to definitely be aware that malicious programs exist for the purposes of stealing our data, for taking control of our systems without our knowing, and, in the worst-case scenario, for stealing our identity.

Indeed, the threats we face online are varied and they can come from anywhere. The best way we can protect ourselves from harm while connected to the online world is to make sure we have an up-to-date and technologically advanced security suite installed. We need a suite that not only includes antivirus capabilities, but also one that can offer us extra features so that we can actively protect ourselves in other ways.

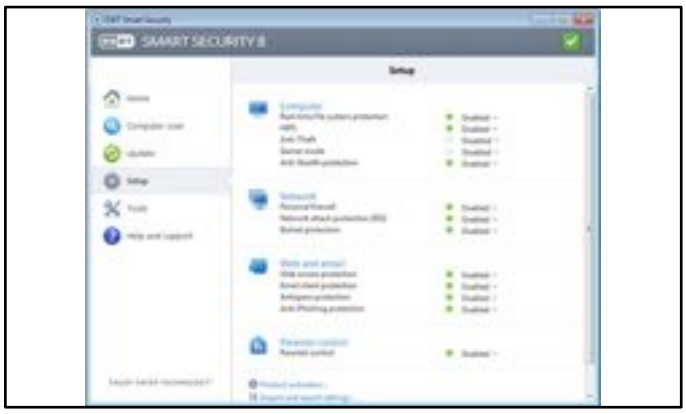
Going beyond antivirus: Smart Security 8

ESET has just announced its key products for 2015: Smart Security 8 and NOD32 Antivirus 8. If you just want a virus scanner for your computer, then NOD32 is your top choice. However, if you want complete protection, then Smart Security 8 is the product you should consider.

Smart Security 8 is a product that extends its protection beyond antivirus and ensures that we are protected from phishing attempts, and even from the theft of our devices. ESET used feedback from its customers and fans to help shape the product, but the overall philosophy that the company holds is true of

the end result. That philosophy is to have a solid antivirus foundation with multiple layers of security built on it.

As an all-in one suite, Smart Security 8 includes technology from ESET's super-advanced NOD32 Antivirus 8 at its helm, which offers real-time protection against viruses, as well as a few new capabilities that are designed to keep pace with the modern threats that are continually being introduced



in the malware space: Enhanced Exploit Blocker, Advanced Memory Scanner, and an Anti-Phishing module.

With Enhanced Exploit Blocker, Smart Security 8 aims to detect vulnerabilities that can be found in some of the most common software that's in use on most Windows computers, including Adobe Reader, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Word. But the big thing is that it can also detect vulnerabilities in Java. Smart Security 8 looks for indicators that the software has been compromised, and these indicators are generally behaviours that are not usual for what the software is known to do. If it's

deemed to be malicious, the Exploit Blocker nabs it.

Working hand in hand with the Exploit Blocker feature is the Advanced Memory Scanner. This is another line of defence that works to detect malware that has been encrypted or made to be otherwise very difficult to detect. This includes malware that has been designed to steal banking information, or to provide remote access to computers. The Advanced Memory Scanner can monitor programs once they uncloak themselves in your PC's memory. If they are found to be malicious? You guessed it; it nabs them, too.

To protect against phishing (a technique where illegitimate sites are made to look like legitimate ones in order to steal our information), Smart Security 8 includes some updates that can block not only known phishing sites, but also sites that are deemed to exist only to scam us.

It does this in a couple of ways: it can compare URLs to a blacklist, and it can also analyse the structure of a Web site to determine if it's trying to mimic a legitimate site. Sites found to be for phishing will be blocked and a warning message will be displayed. Furthermore, there is an improved user submission method so that the service's list of suspicious sites is always up to date and accurate.

ESET has also introduced Botnet Protection in Smart Security 8. This is important because instances of remote attacks on individual computers have been shown to be rising. The purpose of botnets is to infect many computers in order to create a network of computers that can then be controlled for malicious purposes, such as sending spam, for example. ESET's Botnet Protection can detect irregular network communications patterns that leave a network, and it will thwart them if it identifies that they are common to botnet activity and headed towards a blacklisted site.

Complete security without a performance hit

These are just some of the ways that ESET's Smart Suite 8 can help protect us while we are online. We don't really see a lot of this stuff in the interface of the software, but rest assured it's there under the hood, working away while we're working away. At the same time, it won't take up noticeable resources while it does so, which means that system performance won't take a hit.

Other features of ESET's Smart Security 8 include a social media scanner that can scan Facebook and Twitter profiles and determine actions that need to be taken to make them more secure; there is Anti-Stealth technology built-in, which can detect rootkits and other dangerous programs that can hide in an operating system; there is a personal firewall that can further enhance protection while a laptop is connected to hotspots and other public Internet spaces.

Additionally, there is an Anti-Theft feature that can be used for tracking and locating laptops. For Anti-Theft to work, a laptop needs to be registered with ESET's Anti-Theft system. In case of loss or theft, this service can be used to activate cameras, take screen shots, and to see a device's location.

There are parental controls for setting up a safe browsing environment, and this works based on age and subject categories. Illicit sites, obscene sites, even social networking and shopping sites can all be blocked according to the user age that has been selected. It's also customisable, so you don't have to go with the program's defaults.

For gamers, there is a gamer mode that can be invoked at any time. This ensures that the security suite won't all of a sudden interrupt a gaming session with pop-ups, and that CPU usage from the suite remains low. It will still protect the system in the background, it just won't require any user interaction. It's also a good feature for business users, as it can be used during times when presentations need to be given to clients, for example.

Bottom Line

It's obvious that there is a lot to ESET's Smart Security 8 suite, but the program itself is not complicated to use. Its interface offers a simplicity that doesn't put too many features

in the face of the user. It can offer real-time protection against not only infected programs, but also against sites that attempt to steal data in the form of phishing, and this means it's an essential program for any computer that will be connected to the Internet.

How To

How to disable Windows 10's window animations to speed up responsiveness

by Ian Paul PC World

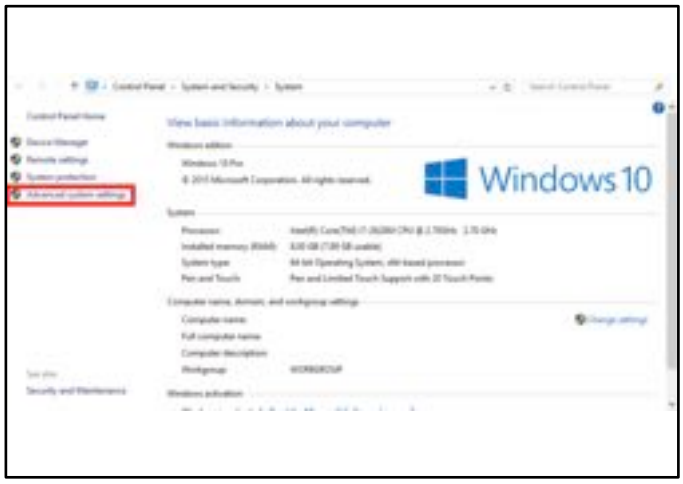
As with many previous versions of Windows, Microsoft infused Windows 10 with a ton of animations to give it a smoother, more user-friendly feel. It's a nice touch... unless you're running an older machine, especially one rocking a spinning hard drive. For those PCs, waiting for an animation to complete adds a few annoying seconds to your Windows experience that don't need to be there.

If you're tired of waiting just a little bit too long for the Start menu to pop-up or for windows to appear and disappear, here's how to disable windows animations in Windows 10.

Right-click the Start menu and select System from the context menu. This will take you to Control Panel > System and Security > System. Now click Advanced system settings.

TIP: If you want to get there a bit faster, open Cortana, type sysdm.cpl, click on the first result, and then click the Advanced tab in the window that opens.

You're now at a small dialog box entitled



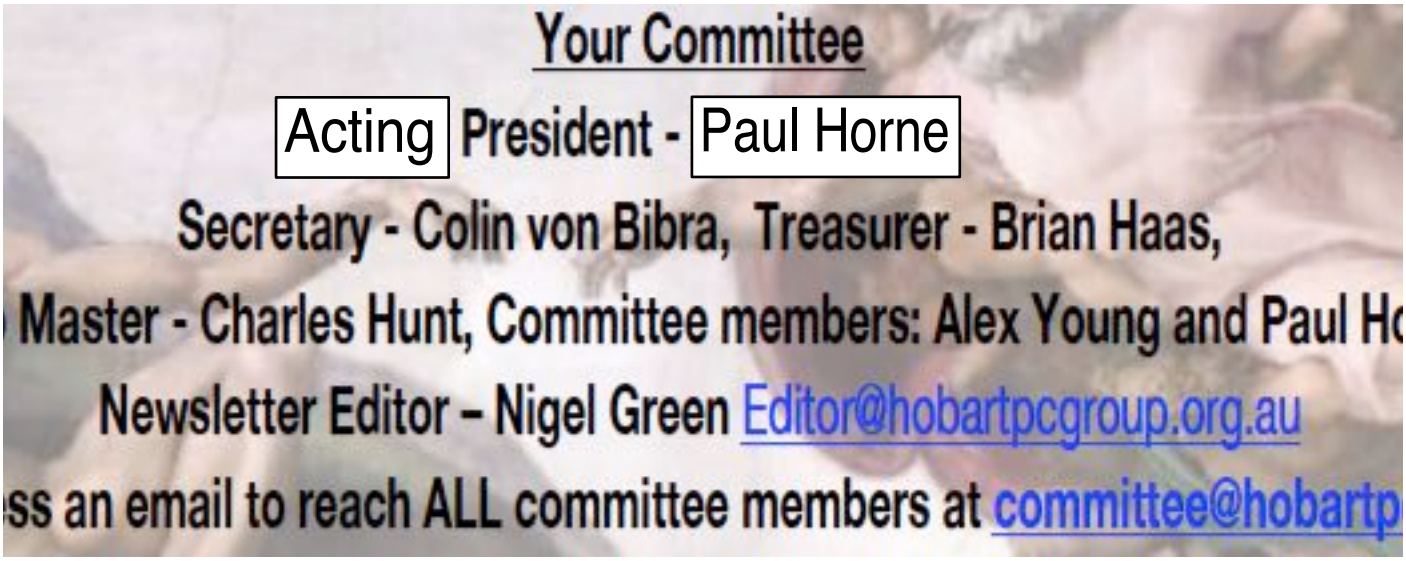
System Properties and have the Advanced tab open. Now, click Settings... under "Performance."

Another window opens. Make sure the Custom radio button is selected, then uncheck "Animate windows when minimizing and maximizing." Then click Apply and OK.

If you'd like you could also check out the rest of the options to tweak your system's visual effects before clicking OK. Most of the options on this list are self-explanatory.

Once you're done, close all the system windows you opened and test out the speed of your newly modified Start menu.

It should appear and disappear in a rather immediate and jarring manner. If your PC has a ton of RAM and a solid state drive, the user experience tradeoff may not be worth the hassle. On an older system, however, that faster response can offer a much better experience than the slower, animated version.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