



OTTAWA

PC NEWS

Volume 24, Number 5

May 2007

PRODUCT REVIEW

Zip Central

by Alan German

My quest for quality open-source software and freeware has moved on to look at file compression utilities. The industry leaders, PKZIP (<http://www.pkware.com/>) and WinZIP (<http://www.winzip.com/>), are not expensive (around US \$30), and work extremely well. But, is there a free product out there that will give similar results? Well, give Zip Central a try.

I think you will be pleasantly surprised.

The interface is very similar to the two commercial products, featuring both a menu bar, and a task bar with icons for frequently used operations such as: **New**, **Open**, **Add**, **Extract** and **Convert** (to .exe). In addition, there are icons for **Test** (to check the integrity of an archive file), **Install** (to install a file

such as *setup.exe* contained in an archive file) and **Cancel**. Presumably, the latter button is used to abort a compress/uncompress operation that is in progress. However, the speed at which the program completes such tasks may make this button normally redundant.

Using the program is simplicity itself. For example, pressing the **Open** button, brings up a browse dialogue box. Once

the desired ZIP file is identified, a list of the files contained in the archive is displayed in the program's main window. Pressing the **Extract** button then brings up a second dialogue box in which a target directory can be selected to which all of the individual files in the archive will be copied. Alternatively, one or more files in the archive can be selected prior to opting for the extraction process.

Many more features are available from the program's menu system including disk spanning, and a range of options to configure various aspects of the program. There is an extensive help file that is both well structured and contains concise information on a variety of topics. In addition, while the program's operations are really intuitive, a nice feature on each dialogue

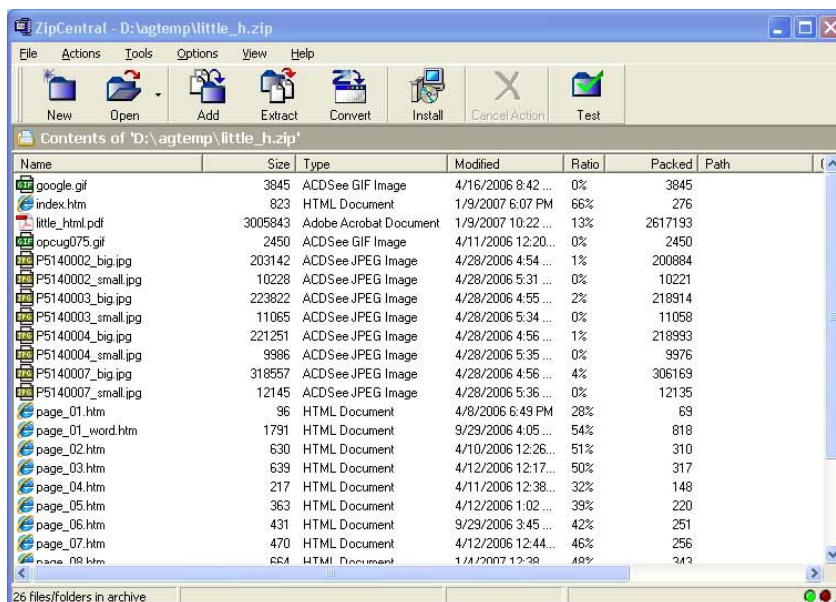
box is an integrated help pane that provides basic instructions on the current task.

According to the program's web site, the software has not been updated since January, 2002. While some may see this as lack of on-going support, I take the view that if the software works well - and it's free - why worry?

Bottom Line

Zip Central Version 4.01 (freeware)

Johan Savås
<http://zipcentral.isCool.net>



The **New** button functions in a very similar way, with dialogue boxes providing browsing for a directory in which to store a new ZIP file, and for the selection of the files to be included in the archive. With an archive file open, and its files visible in the display window, the **Add** button will allow the selection of files to be added to the archive.

Inside this issue:

Calendar / Coming Up / Raffle	2
Review: Zip Central	1
OPCUG Annual BBQ in June	3
Contest Article: Upgrade Envy	4-5
Contact Information	6

Next Meeting: **WEDNESDAY, May 9th, 2007**

April Prize Winners

The winners at the April OPCUG meeting were:

Cornel Bierman, Douglas Hughes and Morris Turpin who all took home a copy of the book *Hacking Exposed*, courtesy of McAfee.

The raffle for the night was won by **Bob Thomas** who won the assorted stuff in the *Vista Launch Kit*, courtesy of Microsoft.

Congrats to the winners and thanks to McAfee and Microsoft for the prizes.

May Raffle

At the May meeting, thanks to the generosity of *Microsoft MindShare*, we will be raffling off our third and final copy of **Microsoft Streets & Trips 2007 with GPS**. This nifty package not only has street-level maps and over 1.2 million points of interest for almost all populated areas in Canada and the U.S., but with the included GPS receiver and your portable computer, you can pin-point your location within metres, have the program speak out directions to you as you drive, mark a trail where you have been, and much more. This is your last chance to win this package!

For details on this product (street value \$150), see <http://www.microsoft.com/streets/default.mspx>.

You can also read a review on the previous release at <http://opcug.ca/public/reviews/s&t2006.htm>.

Tickets are \$1 for one, \$2 for three, or \$5 for ten.

Coming Up...

May 9th, 2007

Speaker: Dr. Michael Geist, University of Ottawa

Topic: Canada's Choice: Copyright, Culture, and the Internet

The talk will focus on how Canadian policy can support emerging developments on the Internet, with a particular focus on the user-generated content boom. Copyright law plays a key role in this regard, with the danger that Parliament may adopt reforms that could make it more difficult for the participatory Internet to thrive.

Dr. Michael Geist is the Canada Research Chair of Internet and E-commerce Law at the University of Ottawa. Prof. Geist is a prolific writer on topics such as privacy and copyright and other technology law issues, with columns that regularly appear in media outlets around the globe. He serves on the director and advisory boards of several Internet and IT law organizations including the Canadian Internet Registration Authority and his work has been recognized with several important awards and grants including a Scholarly Paper Award, major research grants, the Public Leadership Award from Canarie for his contribution to the Internet in Canada, and he was named one of Canada Top 40 Under 40.

CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, May 9 th	7:30 p.m. Auditorium of the Canada Museum of Science and Technology , 1867 St. Laurent Blvd. http://www.science-tech.nmstc.ca/english/index.cfm
Beginners' SIG	Wednesday, May 9 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
IT-Pro SIG	Wednesday, May 9 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Linux SIG	Wednesday, May 9 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
PIG SIG (Wing SIG West)	Wednesday, May 9 th	10:00 p.m. (after all other SIGs) at Chances "R" restaurant, Baseline Rd. at Woodroffe Ave. (College Square Shopping Centre)
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, May 9 th	10:00 p.m. (after all other SIGs) at Liam Maguire's, St. Laurent Blvd. at Innes Rd.
Please note that unless otherwise noted, SIGs meet at 9:00 p.m. (immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting).		

ANNUAL BBQ

OPCUG Annual BBQ—OLÉ!

When: Wednesday, June 13, 2007 **Time:** 6:00 pm **Where:** Outside, at the Museum of Science and Tech.

This year we are doing something a little different for the OPCUG Annual BBQ in June -we are having it catered by *The Lone Star!*

As in the past, you can bring guests, and it's free. However, unlike in the past, we need to insist that all who want to eat (members and their guests) pre-register by June 8th with their menu choices. Guests can only be pre-registered by an OPCUG member.

Members and guests who are not pre-registered will not get any food.

Once all the catering details have been approved, pre-registration instructions and a menu will be posted on the OPCUG website at <http://opcug.ca>. Click on the **Meetings** button in the left frame and follow the link for the **Annual BBQ** on June 13th. We expect to be ready to accept registrations by the first or second week of May.



The BBQ will be followed by **speaker** Paul Leroux, Public Relations Manager and Technology Analyst at QNX Software Systems. The **topic** will be "QNX - the company, its technology and applications you use every day".

QNX Software Systems, founded in 1980 with headquarters here in Ottawa (Kanata), is the industry leader in realtime, embedded operating system technology. QNX technology has been used in almost everything from nuclear power plants to Acuras. They distribute products for network routers, medical instruments, vehicle telematics units, security and defense systems, industrial robotics, and other mission- or life-critical applications in over 100 countries and to global leaders such as Cisco, DaimlerChrysler, General Electric, Lockheed Martin, Acura and Siemens. Our speaker will describe how we "use" QNX every day, making a credit card purchase, driving a car, or using the Internet. In short, how technology developed here in Ottawa has made such a large impact worldwide.

Paul Leroux is a longtime employee of QNX familiar with the company's history and QNX technology, as an author or co-author of articles for technical trade publications. He currently has dual roles with QNX, as Public Relations Manager and Technology Analyst.

CONTEST FOR BEST NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Upgrade Envy

by Peter Hawkins

I just wish that this was a simple tale, easily told, with no great import. At least part of the previous statement is true! And, it began quite innocently too.

Just before Christmas, my son Matthew told me that he had bought the latest and greatest Windows XP Media computer. I don't remember all he said, but quite clearly Core 2 Duo E6400, 2 gigs ram, 500 GB hard drive, 22 inch (yes...a 22 inch) wide monitor, and perhaps a few other things remained in my mind. Now you need to know that I am a recovering upgrader. I have faithfully recited the 12 step mantra every day for the last 4 years and thought that I was well on the way to recovery.

Alas...such a fool was I! The ugly truth is that his simple declaration, said in all innocence and pride, knocked me off the wagon! I was becoming envious! I mean really envious! To the point where memories of coaxing every last byte of ram space out of my 286 (and later 386, oh yes and 486...) came flooding back in. The joys of loading tiny little programs in UPPER memory, changing the load order to squeeze just one more in. And then succumbing to the evil necessity (?) of a motherboard upgrade, just to stay 3 waves behind the front. I was doomed.

My every waking thought was directed at a new acquisition. How could I get my old (very old) Pentium 2.2 GHz renewed? I could not afford to compete with my son... how unseemly, but something was needed. This of course required a trip to the friendly local computer store. (They must have seen me

coming!) And the counter staff were so helpful...not just the usual 5 minutes for me. I got the royal treatment: a full discussion of an affordable upgrade path that would relieve my anxieties. The best part was that I could purchase just 3 little items over the next 3 months, hardly make a dent in the family budget, and, once again, be able to discuss computing with my son from a position approximating equality. (Note: this is just self delusion talking - there wasn't the proverbial snowball's chance in h3** of being 2 stone's throws from the next county, let alone "equality". But such is the nature of an addict's mind!)

They must have seen me coming!

On that fateful day I bought item #1 - a 1 gig stick of PC3200 ram memory to spruce up my laggardly computer's performance. And it worked too, even better than I had hoped, for I discovered that after installing the aforementioned stick, not only did I have 1,256 MB of wonderful active ram memory, but another completely unexplored path opened up, something that the guy in the computer store hadn't even breathed into my ear - overclocking!

What joy! What bliss! Almost like winning the lottery or getting the very best Xmas present. Just pump up the CPU I had, and virtual miracles would take place! Nowhere in my thoughts had this ever come up and I was just blown away. Could it

work? I decided that the only way was to take a look at the CPU I had - I mean to physically grasp it in my hand and look at it. Feel it. Have its potential of unlocked power in just one hand.

At this juncture, you the reader, a sensible straight-forward thinker might be asking yourself: "What could possibly go wrong?" Just a simple look really, just 2 little plastic levers to open. So I did what you would expect: I pulled those 2 little plastic levers up and in full expectation that my fan and CPU would spring clear, I tugged the assembly upwards. The total length of travel was less than ¼ inch. What a disappointment! But do not yet decry my ineptitude. Where there is a will, there is a way. In my case, all that was needed was gentleness, patience, and 15 minutes with 2 screwdrivers and a pair of pliers. And I succeeded. In my hand was the brains of my computer. There it was, glued almost in the center of the back of the big aluminium heat sink - the CPU. It was, as you already knew, slightly bent! And there was no way I was going to be able to see what pins were wrong, let alone ever get it back where it came from!

What to do? The answer is obvious - just go back to that wonderful customer-centric computer store and ask for a little help repairing my adjustment. They recognized me, and remembered me and that gave me big warm feelings towards them, and of course one of their techs could fix my adjustment real quick, no problemo! Just have a little faith that I was still on the

(Continued on page 5)

Upgrade Envy (Continued from page 4)

right track. Everything was OK. See you next month for the next part of the plan.

At this point in time, I did a little stock taking, an evaluation of the situation as it was unfolding. The new memory stick cost \$140 (taxes etc) but the tech's help was only \$10, so I've only spent \$150, pretty close to the planned trajectory. Onwards and upwards.

The second month arrived, and part two was due to be implemented. This was simple - just purchase a new motherboard for \$80 and wait until month 3 when I would buy the new chip. That went pretty well. I called the store, and they had two in stock, one with MY name on it! Could it get any better than this? I picked it up and spent the next 30 days reading about how easy it was to install a motherboard. Just simple hand tools, a little care, and just 1 hour of time. It took longer to read the installation manual than it was going to take to install the thing.

What could I do while I waited for the final step of my plan? That was an easy choice. OVERCLOCK! So

I did. I discovered a universal secret of overclocking: the CPU gets hotter! Most of the time the sensor tried to tell me that things were OK. The CPU ran 4 or 5 degrees warmer (not hotter than tolerances I told myself) measured in Celsius. As long as the workload didn't stray

***What could I do?
That was an easy
choice.
OVERCLOCK!***

over 30 percent, things ran fine. I had a 3 GHz Pentium, a 30% plus faster chip for NO more money. Well again there is a slight deception here. There was no way I was going to say that I had a 2.994 GHz chip, just a little rounding up, and after all, isn't that how you would round it up anyway?) Problems however were encountered. Not BIG problems, just little ones. Any really serious work load on the processor made the temperature spike. I didn't think that the motherboard would allow a chip to get that

hot and not shut down. Automatically, according to the BIOS. The actual number my defective sensor tried to report was 85 degrees. Just momentarily. For a very short time. Not even long enough to cause a shut-down. Barely! Oh well, to alleviate my worries, I focused on the new CPU purchase I would make next month. And one other thing.

You see, I had purchased a 19 inch monitor the previous August, so the 17 inch one was sitting on a shelf, gathering dust. I used it with my laptop to show pictures to friends of the lovely vacation spots where I had sustained body-damaging injuries to several joints, which had necessitated a very long rehab, as of this writing, not yet over. I digress! I could use that older monitor because I had an AGP card with slots for 2 monitors. I could have a 19 + 17 = 36 inch monitor, which clearly was better because it was even wider than my son's 22 inch one. Maybe that was how it all started.

To be continued...



OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the Canada Museum of Science and Technology, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa. Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. and Special Interest Groups go until 10 p.m.

Fees:	OPCUG membership:	\$25 per year
Mailing Address:	3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6	
Web address:	http://opcug.ca	
Bulletin board — PUB II (BBS)	http://opcug.ca/default.htm	

President and System Administrator

Chris Taylor chris.taylor@opcug.ca 613-727-5453

Meeting Coordinator

Bob Gowan bob.gowan@opcug.ca

Treasurer

Alan German alan.german@opcug.ca

Secretary

Gail Eagen gail.eagen@opcug.ca

Membership Chairman

Mark Cayer mark.cayer@opcug.ca 613-823-0354

Newsletter

Brigitte Lord (editor/layout) brigitte.lord@opcug.ca
(Mr.) Jocelyn Doire jocelyn.doire@opcug.ca
 (e-mail distribution)

Public Relations

Morris Turpin PR@opcug.ca 613-729-6955

Facilities

Bob Walker 613-489-2084

Webmaster

Brigitte Lord opcug-webmaster@opcug.ca

Privacy Director

Wayne Houston privacy@opcug.ca

Director without Portfolio

Don Chiasson

Beginners' SIG

Chris Taylor chris.taylor@opcug.ca 613-727-5453

IT-Pro SIG

Harald Freise ITProSIG@opcug.ca

Linux SIG

Don Chiasson

© OPCUG 2007.

Reprint permission is granted* to non-profit organizations, provided credit is given to the author and *The Ottawa PC News*. OPCUG requests a copy of the newsletter in which reprints appear.

*Permission is granted only for articles written by OPCUG members, and which are not copyrighted by the author.

How to get the OTTAWA PC NEWS by e-mail



Want to get the newsletter electronically? There are two formats available: plain text and Adobe Acrobat PDF. Simply send a message to listserv@opcug.ca. Leave the subject blank and in the body of the message, type:

subscribe newslettertxt
 (to get the plain text version).

or:

subscribe newsletterpdf
 (to get the Adobe Acrobat PDF version).

And if you decide you do not need the printed version mailed to you anymore, simply let Mark Cayer (membership chairman) know. He can be reached at general meetings, as well as by e-mail at Mark.Cayer@opcug.ca. You might want to wait until you have successfully received at least one issue electronically before opting out from the printed version.

To subscribe to the Announcements List, e-mail listserv@opcug.ca. Leave the subject blank and in the body of the message, type:

subscribe announcements

Within a couple of minutes you will receive a confirmation message from the listserv.

“Announcements” is a low volume list that the Board of Directors uses to get in touch with the membership. Subscribers can expect at least one message per month – the meeting reminder that goes out a few days in advance of the general meeting. Other than that, the only time it is used is when the Board feels there is some important news that should be brought to the attention of all members.