

Re: Self Help for the Computer Illiterate

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2005-09/msg00334.html>

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 - *Date:* Fri, 02 Sep 2005 03:20:39 GMT
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> I have some friends who own a small retail shop. They have some cool
> stuff and they need to get a website, and do some minimal maintenance on
> it. The problem is that they're old enough to be pre-literate as far as
> computers go, and they know _nothing_. They have a PC sitting in their
> shop and they need to start using it.
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> So far they've had two kinds of instruction:
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> One was the guy who built the computer for them, who couldn't understand
> folks who can't understand computers (and was more interested in showing
> them how to download porn than how to actually use the thing).
>
> The other was a program he recommended that was entirely centered around
> teaching by rote. These are smart people, and they need to know at
> least some of the principals behind whats going on, not just "push this
> here button and that there dirty picture will pop up".
>
> Anyone helped anyone with this recently? Anyone _been_ in that spot and
> been helped out of it? I'd like to recommend a book and/or program that
> they can use to learn in their spare time (I've already suggested a
> community college class but I'm afraid it may be the learn by rote
> approach).
>
> Thanks

In my experience from teaching an Intro To Windows class to people like this a few years ago, and helping various computer illiterate family and friends get up to speed, I've come to a conclusion. People that understand File Manager will be successful, and those who don't will continue to lose their work and cuss at their PC. I always start with file manager and what folders and files mean. Forget the My Documents concept that hides all the details, they need to know how the filing system works. A couple of hours with File Manager (I guess I need to call it Windows Explorer now) and doing a simple document in Word and they're On Their Way. As you're training them on file open/save and file cut/copy/paste, continually ask What Folder Are You In.

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