e-CourtReporter Presents:

e-Tips Newsletter

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Wil Wilcox: EclipseNT and WindowsXP
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Constant innovation is a hallmark of EclipseNT, so there's always something new to learn. It may be an explanation of an amazing new feature or just a faster way to do a familiar task, but Eclipse users have always been eager to help each other. In this spirit, we continue our FREE newsletter to anyone who wishes to receive it. Whether our **e-Tips** are a basic tip for editing efficiency or a challenging macro, we hope you'll find them helpful. Tell your friends to sign up for e-Tips at www.EclipseNT.com. We would like to thank all those who overwhelmed us by your positive responses to our first e-Tips newsletter. You will be able to find a complete archive of e-Tips at our website

Wil's e-Tip

EclipseNT and WindowsXP

Should you upgrade to WindowsXP? The experts are saying that Windows XP and Windows 2000 are at least 10 times as stable as Windows ME, 98 or 95. Wow! Plus, it's easier than Windows 2000. If you use EclipseNT and are in the market for a new computer, I believe that Windows XP is a very good choice. I'm not going to try to cover all the new features and benefits of XP. There are lots of newspaper and magazine articles comprehensibly covering the subject for you to refer to.

Here are some of the highlights: WindowsXP is a brand-new operating system. As such, there are bound to be bugs that need to be fixed. WindowsXP uses Windows Update for downloading updates and can even be set to do so automatically. Also, WindowsXP can't read non-DOS floppy disks (i.e. MeritWriter, TurboWriter, StenoWriter, DiscWriter, Transcriptor X). If you have one of those writers, you'll want to always do realtime (which Anita Paul Johnston would say we should be doing anyway) or read in your notes from cable.

Anyone thinking of upgrading their current computer should think twice. First of all, the best way to upgrade your present computer is to make a

backup of all your files (how many of you are regularly doing that?) and then gather up the program CDs you use and do a fresh install. That means you will be erasing everything on your system and then installing XP which is not a minor thing. Upgrading Windows can sometimes even cause more problems than benefits, especially if things don't go well. It is possible to do a Windows upgrade without completely reinstalling everything, but this does not always work as well as a fresh install. The only reason I would upgrade your computer from a previous version of Windows is if your computer crashes all the time and you need to get the stability that WindowsXP provides. It's much easier to upgrade Windows versions by just getting a new computer. Spending a week getting everything running smoothly again after doing an upgrade is not my idea of a good time.

If you currently have Windows 2000, there is very little reason to upgrade to WindowsXP. XP is an incremental upgrade to Windows 2000 (W2K), which is supposed to maintain all the stability of W2K, and is a little more user friendly. XP is a bit better for newbies or beginners. XP also has better compatibility with older peripherals and Windows programs, but, sorry, Stenograph, not CaseCatalyst as of yet. Stay tuned. Other than that, they're pretty much the same. If you're conservative and don't want to risk any bugs, stick with W2K for at least the next six months until Microsoft has had a chance to work the kinks out and has released the first XP service pack. A service pack is a collection of bug fixes that correct the initial major problems. Service packs can either be downloaded or purchased for a very minimal cost on CD. It also takes hardware manufacturers a few months oftentimes to have drivers released for their peripherals. The same thing is true of the other programs you use. Sometimes they need to be updated to work well with the newer versions of Windows and it usually takes a while for all of those things to sort themselves out.

If you're on Version 8 and still haven't upgraded to NT, now's the time to make the change before Version 8 is no longer supported. Don't expect Version 8 backup and restore to work in WindowsXP and who knows what else. Now is the time for NT to shine.

There are two versions of WindowsXP, Home and Professional. The major thing that XP Professional adds is the ability to encrypt files stored on your computer by default. It also has better support for networking and remote-control functions, which could come into play if you are thinking of having someone doing remote, live editing of your realtime. XP Home probably has all the features you'll really need.

The bottom line is that if you are in the market to get a new computer that WindowsXP or Windows 2000 are the best ways to go. Otherwise, stick with

what you've got until you can afford a new PC. That said, if you're a power user, you'd probably be able to work your way through an upgrade. However, think twice before doing so. Remember that if it isn't broken don't fix it.

Keith's e-Tip

Capitalizing Job-Specific Autoreplacements

hte=the
yon=I don't know
DT=Department of Transportation
withthe=with the

These are Autoreplacements -- that is, an unbroken string of letters (thus, without spaces or hyphens or other punctuation) which EclipseNT will automatically replace with pre-specified text. They can be used in at least three ways.

1. To prevent typing errors. Thus if I type "hte" and press the spacebar or the Enter key, EclipseNT will type "the" in its place.

2. As typing shortcuts -- for example, if I type "yon" and press the spacebar or the Enter key, EclipseNT will type "I don't know" for me. A typical shorthand reporter or scopist probably knows hundreds of steno "briefs" that can be used as a foundation for such autoreplacements.

3. To facilitate typing long names or phrases -- for example, CE=Caisse d'Epargne.

Autoreplacements can be created in several ways.

1. Go to User Settings/Advanced/Autoreplacements. You probably have a list of about 200 autoreplacements that I shared with Jeremy long ago to help prevent the most common typing errors. You can remove any line in the list, and you can add to the list without limit.

2. I've created a macro to turn an error into an autoreplacement. For example, you type "athn" when you meant to type "than." Leave the "athn" alone, but space over and type "than" and then space over and press Alt 7 or Shift Alt A. The "athn" will be deleted and a new autoreplacement will be added to your user settings: athn=than. (Note: This works only for a one-word error and a one-word correction. It doesn't work for multi-word phrases.

3. You can create an autoreplacement while globaling. For instance, I may have used a variety of steno strokes to write "Caisse d'Epargne." If I suspect I'll want to type this name quite often, I can type "CE=Caisse d'Epargne" while I'm in the globaling dialogue. EclipseNT will not only create my global but create the autoreplacement as well.

Now, perhaps you already knew all this about autoreplacements. So here's my tip. Use capital letters for job-specific autoreplacements. Why? Because the autoreplacement list is sorted alphabetically, with the capitalized letters appearing first. When I no longer need the autoreplacement, I can go to User Settings/Advanced/Autoreplacements and I'll find the capitalized entries like AT and CE and EE at the top of the list. This makes it easy to delete the autoreplacements that are no longer of any use to me.

Upcoming 3-day EclipseNT e-POWER Workshops

Costa Mesa, CA Nov 9-11, 2001 (Only a few seats left!)

Las Vegas, NV Feb 1-3, 2001

For more details: www.EclipseNT.com

We'd also like to thank the great EclipseNT users who have joined us at one of our many workshops and we hope to see you again soon!

Who Are We?

Wil Wilcox is a freelance court reporter in Los Angeles, California, and has been a technology consultant for reporters since 1995. Since 1998, he and Robert Denos have been the Advantage Software representatives for Southern California.

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Disclaimer

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