e-CourtReporter Presents:

e-Tips Newsletter

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Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.
Louisa May Alcott

Wil Wilcox: Synchronize your Clock Automatically
Keith Vincent: "Glue" Modifiers

Constant innovation is a hallmark of Total Eclipse, 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.

Wil's e-Tip

Synchronize your Clock Automatically

Being sure that you have the right start and stop time on your jobs or that your computer's time will even be close to correct when trying to synchronize with a videographer is much easier to accomplish with Windows XP.

It's a simple fact that one of the most frequent complaints about the average computer is that the internal clock doesn't keep the right time. Your computer may be anywhere from a few minutes fast or slow to hours out of synch. That just will not do. The causes for this are mainly hardware related and tend to vary from one make of computer to the next. With Windows XP, you can synchronize your time with a very precise Internet time server hooked up to a virtually perfect atomic clock that provides the correct current time when you log onto the Internet or at preset intervals, and it's quite simple.

This is done through a new feature in Windows XP called "Time Synchronization." Double-click on the time in the Taskbar to open the Date and Time Properties dialog box. This dialog box can also be reached from the Control Panel by double-clicking on the Date and Time icon.

Once you've opened it up, The Date and Time dialog box has a new tab called "Internet Time." Click on it to open the tab, and you'll see that it can be set to "Automatically synchronize with an Internet time server." Just put a checkmark in the box to enable this feature so that while you're on the Internet in the future the time will be updated to the correct time.

If you click on the Update Now button (while you are connected to The Internet) you will synchronize your computer to the Windows Time Server. You may also select different time servers using the drop-down arrow. Windows will automatically set up the date for its next synchronization. Your computer will have to be connected to the Internet on the date and at the time scheduled, or you can update your clock manually by going back into the Date and Time Properties and clicking update now. If your computer's date is not correct, the time won't sync correctly, but you can change the date from this same Window.

Now you can see that with Windows XP you'll always be on time. Yeah… I know, that's easy for me to say.

Keith's e-Tip

"Glue" Modifiers

You probably have at least one set of alphabets in your steno dictionary. It should be defined with "glue" symbols so that each letter of the alphabet glues to other alphabet letters but not to regular words. The ampersand is the glue symbol, so {&A} would be a typical "A" alphabet entry in your dictionary.

Until recently, you'd need several alphabets to take care of stitching (K-E-I-T-H), acronyms (NASA), capped names with periods (M.I.T.), and alphabets with parentheses (Section 30(b)6.)

If you're using Total Eclipse, however, you can take advantage of the glue modifier. Here's how.

Let {&A} be the way you define your upper-case alphabet. Let {&a} be the way you define your lower-case alphabet. Those two alphabets can be sufficient, if you just add a few "glue modifiers" to your dictionary.

You could write ST*FP (or whatever steno you want) BEFORE using a glue alphabet, and that would indicate you want a "stitched" alphabet. Use {&-*} as the definition for such a ST*FP stroke.

You could write PE*RD (or whatever steno you want) BEFORE using a glue alphabet, and that would indicate you want an alphabet with periods. Use {&*.} as the definition for such a PE*RD stroke.

You could write PR*EPBZ (*or whatever steno you want) BEFORE using a glue alphabet, and that would indicate you want an alphabet with parentheses surrounding each letter. Use {&(*)} as the definition for such a PR*EPBZ stroke.

You'll also want a stroke to reset the gluing to normal. TPH*RPL would do. Use {&*} as the definition for such a stroke.

Breck Record has offered a great suggestion for the use of these tools. Since you know there are some words that often precede the need for a style of gluing, you could insert the glue modifier with these words. For example, you could define "spelled" as "spelled{&-*}" so that if a witness says, "That's spelled K-E-I-T-H," your gluing would be preset to switch to a stitched alphabet after you write the word "spelled."

Another example, you could define your "United States Code" stroke(s) as "United States Code{&(*)}" so that Eclipse would be ready to translate things like "101(A)5" if you use your glue alphabet after writing "United States Code."

By the way, if you have a conflict to which you want to add a glue modifier, define it like "\code\{&(*)}Code{#G}" so that the glue modifier doesn't interfere with the command to convert numbers to pure digits.

Hats off to Jeremy for adding these features to Total Eclipse, and hats off to Breck for a great suggestion for using them.

Please note: If you're using Windows 95 or Windows NT, then Total Eclipse is not an option for you, but you can use EclipseNT 2.2.0.3, which supports the glue modifiers.

Upcoming 3-day Total Eclipse e-POWER Workshops

Honolulu, HI	October 4-6, 2002
Burbank, CA	November 1-3, 2002
Las Vegas, NV	January 31 – February 2, 2003
San Diego, CA	May 30 – June 1, 2003
Houston, TX	October TBA
Burbank, CA	November TBA

For more details: www.EclipseNT.com

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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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