



e-Power Video Tutorials presents:



e-Tips Newsletter

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Keith Vincent

Hardware and Software: The Artist and the Instrument

For the last 20 years, I've been a court reporter; but for 20 years before that, my keyboard was the organ or piano. A musician longs for a fine instrument to play, and I can imagine the instrument longs for a great musician. The sweetest moments are when an artist reveals an instrument's potential and when a fine instrument inspires an artist.

Reporters and captioners are artists, too. **What are the instruments of a great performance in our profession? I think they are of three sorts: 1) Our minds and bodies, 2) the hardware we use, and 3) the software that is a bridge between our thoughts and their expressions in print.**

1) **Our performance begins with recognizing what we hear.** Then the steno writer's fingers move or the voice writer speaks, but we can't do much without a liberal education and a good vocabulary.

2) Be it a steno keyboard or a computer and microphone, **we need professional-quality hardware**; otherwise, performance will suffer. In realtime transcription, good writing can be badly distorted by a machine that stacks steno strokes. No wonder that new writers with anti-stacking (like the Passport Touch) attract crowds at conventions.

3) **Software.** On steno writers it's easy to notice differences in colors, number of keys, screen quality, and keyboard comfort; but **some folks think all CAT software is basically the same. I disagree.** I think **your choice of software and your commitment to keep it updated are among your most important professional decisions.** I recognize it should be your own choice, and CAT system loyalties can be very strong. Over 20 years ago I chose Eclipse, and I think it's one of the best decisions I've ever made. Here's why:

A) **Eclipse takes integration to the max.** What amazes me is not just how well Eclipse features work but how well they work together.

(Continued on page 4)

Upcoming Webinars

Michael Starkman - Sept. 17 & 24
Auto-Briefs & Accuracy:
The Ultimate Power Couple

Keith Vincent - Oct. 30, Nov. 6
Bridge Mobile & Connection Magic

Info and signup at EclipseWebinars.com

Keith's Seminars on Total Eclipse 6

Dallas: September 21
Houston: September 28

Earn up to 10 hours of CE credit

Info and signup at KVincent.com

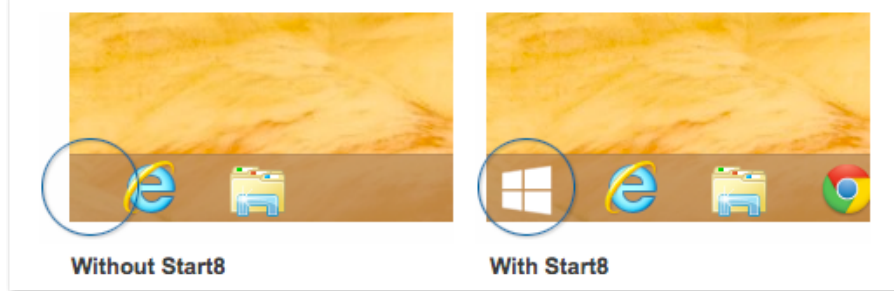
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Start8 for Windows 8



allow you to configure your computer to boot straight to the traditional Windows desktop, bypassing the Start menu altogether. This should make you feel much more at home with Windows 8. I also recommend the default Windows 7 style.

The first thing you'll find when you get Windows 8 is that there is no Start button.

Microsoft wants users to migrate to the Start screen, the tablet-like screen with tiles designed to be touch friendly. The Start screen takes some getting used to. If you're like me, the first thing I would always do when booting into Windows 8 is get out of the Start screen and back to the Windows desktop as soon as possible. To get Windows 8 more like you are used to and not so radically different from Windows 8, you will want a Start screen replacement utility.

On a notebook computer, the Windows 7 style Start button is much more familiar and even more productive. To ease the transition to Windows 8, I recommend that you try **Start8, my favorite Start button replacement.**

Start8 puts the familiar Start button in the bottom-left corner of your screen. It is a \$5 utility from a company called Stardock. Before you spend your five bucks, you can try it for free for 30 days to see if it works for you. The Start8 settings

Start8 does allow you to pin Windows 8 modern style apps to the start menu. I suspect that you will not really even need this much and that in no time you will be using your computer like you were before, with this terrific utility.

It should be noted that Start8 is not the only program of its kind. Another very popular one is Pokki. Pokki is free but advertises its app store at startup. It has just been announced that Lenovo computers are going to come with Pokki so we will be seeing much more of Pokki.

Windows 8.1, which will be released this October, also has a Start button. Yes, indeed, Microsoft has been listening to the critics. However, it does not have the functionality Start8 does and is more of, in my opinion, a placebo for a Start button.

I downloaded Start8 for all of my laptops and even a Windows 8 tablet and have been very happy with it. It is the first program that I recommend downloading for Windows 8 to help you get off to a good start.

Keith's Total Eclipse 6 Seminars in September

On **September 21st in Dallas** and again on **September 28th in Houston**, Keith Vincent will be offering a **small-group seminar devoted to Version 6 of Total Eclipse.** Class size is deliberately kept quite small (about 20 people), and you are expected to bring your computers for a hands-on experience of the Eclipse 6. It's a great way to learn how to use Connection Magic, Shared Editing, Bridge Mobile, and other great new Eclipse features.

The day is set up in two parts. The **morning and afternoon focus on the transition to Total Eclipse 6**, and they offer .7 CEU. The **evening is about automatic indexing** and offers .3 CEU. Eligible for NCRA credit, this seminar completely fulfills the Texas reporter's need for 10 hours of continuing education (including rules/ethics).

Space is limited, so be sure to register early. **For more info, please visit KVincnet.com.**

e-Power Video Tutorials: e-Tip Special

Use this form to take advantage of discounted pricing (ends September 30, 2013).



Translation Magic (.3 CEU)

_____ \$59.95

Keyboard Magic (.4 CEU)

_____ \$59.95

Automatic Number Conversion (.4 CEU)

_____ \$59.95

Form Fields & Automatic Indexing (.4 CEU)

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Shipping & Handling, \$5 per disk (max. \$15)

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Mail to: Keith Vincent, 1910 Ottawa Lane, Houston, Texas 77043

For more info on e-Power Tutorials, visit: www.KVincent.com.

Passport Touch

The 2013 NCRA convention saw the unveiling of the Passport Touch by Advantage Technology. "Touch" refers to the keyboard's great feel and to the writer's touch screen. A scroll wheel and function buttons can also be used if you prefer.

Innovative features include the Re-Writer. Because it has 32 gigabytes of memory (and supports 32GB microSD cards and 32GB USB drives), it can store every detail of your keystrokes. You could then re-adjust your key settings and have your steno reinterpreted in light of your new key settings.

The Passport Touch includes **a crystal-clear hideaway screen, a built-in microphone, triple storage of audio files, and built-in Visualizer movies** to make the interface not just beautiful but extra easy to use. Details at eclipsecat.com.



Eclipse Webinars: Fall 2013

On **September 17th and 24th, Michael Starkman** will present a two-part webinar called "Auto-Brief and Accuracy: The Ultimate Power Couple." Eclipse Auto-Brief has been enhanced in dozens of ways, including the addition of more than 80,000 Kislingbury suggestions in Total Eclipse 6. Michael will offer an in-depth class on Auto-Brief, dictionary management, and translation accuracy. You can earn up to .4 CEU from these two sessions.

On **October 30th and November 6th, Keith**

Vincent will offer a two-part webinar devoted to using Connection Magic and Bridge Mobile with any CAT system, not just Eclipse. You can earn up to .4 CEU from these two sessions.

Each webinar goes from 8:30-10:30 pm Eastern Time. You can attend live, but you can also watch the edited, recorded version that is conveniently available about a week later.

For more info and registration, please visit EclipseWebinars.com.

Hardware and Software – Keith Vincent *(cont. from page 1)*

Over time, intelligent prefix/suffix addition, intelligent conflict resolution, and automatic number conversion have been imitated in other programs, but generally as isolated features. Eclipse can handle even dictionary entries like “TODZ=to do so\dollars{}to\{^s}to”. That’s a conflict that involves number conversion and suffix addition and is designed to deal with a stacking/shadowing problem. In musical terms, some programs are a flute playing single notes while Eclipse is a piano playing chords where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

B) **Eclipse makes it easier for me to write.** I do avoid conflicts for homonyms like there/their/they’re or affect/effect, but I can write more easily since I don’t have to worry about things like up to date/up-to-date or number/No. or even yes/yes/, yes/, yes. Am I railing against the orthodoxy of conflict-free theory? Not at all. I just know that Eclipse and Eclipse Vox let you use conflicts in a very realistic way and get great results.

C) **Eclipse makes number-writing easy.** It’s very rare for me to worry about how to get a written-out number versus digits. Eclipse can easily follow your number-formatting rules, whether basic or complex.

D) **Eclipse Translation Magic understands multi-stroke untranlates and misstrokes.** No matter how big your dictionary, there’s always some word you’ve never yet written. Most systems offer basic phonetics, limited to one-stroke items. Eclipse pioneered intelligent phonetics and dragged/dropped key rescue in the ‘90s for things that are not in your dictionary. It now offers its unique magic for multi-stroke words/phrases that would be untrans or misstrans on other software.

E) **Eclipse Auto-Brief. Again, easier writing** (for voice writers, too). When I first used this in 2007, I wrote “piezoelectric” in several strokes. On other systems, it would have been an untran, but Translation Magic understood. After the second time (not even the same steno), Eclipse offered P*EU. So easy. If you spell something that takes at least five strokes, Eclipse offers an Auto-Brief immediately. The software can also use

80,000+ Mark Kislbury shortcuts. It can remind you of briefs in your dictionary that you’ve forgotten. True, others have imitated Auto-Brief, but not integrated with Translation Magic.

F) **Eclipse AutoMagic = super-efficient editing.** Fewer keystrokes means faster editing, more income, and less time until software pays for itself. Each time I move the cursor, Eclipse looks at the context and underlying dictionaries to offer a list of 10 easy choices. Press a number and move on. Global replacements take only one or two steps, with no typing. If I mark a phrase, I’m offered an Auto-Brief or a Google search. AutoMagic is found only in Eclipse. I’ve not seen another program that is so interactive and intuitive. It directly affects my income and how much free time I have to enjoy life.

H) **Eclipse Connection Magic and Shared Editing gives teamwork a new meaning.** New in Total Eclipse 6 is the ability for multiple people to edit a document simultaneously, all with access to the audio. It really is a game-changer for our profession. Talk about multi-tasking! I could write in Houston while a scopist in Dallas stays close to my cursor, cleaning up little errors; a second scopist in Florida could hang back, doing final-quality editing; and a proofreader in California could make sure everything is double-checked. My realtime clients would see all corrections on their Bridge or Bridge Mobile screens. I would focus on writing, and my team would make it look awesome.

Regardless of what system you use, I’m hoping that what I have written here will cause some folks to say, “I didn’t know software could do that. I have not updated my system in a while.” **CAT programs are not all basically the same; but whatever you use, make sure your software is up to date, and please explore new features as they are added.**

A fine instrument inspires an artist, but it must be well-tuned. Just a few thoughts to keep your performance fresh.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document represents the current views of Keith Vincent and Wil Wilcox and those who submit articles on the issues discussed as of the date of publication. Market conditions change and, thus, after the date of publication, e-Power Video Tutorials cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information herein.

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