

e-CourtReporter Presents:  
**e-Tips Newsletter**

No. 40 – September 3, 2004

“A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort.”

*Herm Albright*

**Wil Wilcox: xFiles Dialog Saves Time Opening Transcripts and Files**  
**Keith Vincent: Enhanced Automated Paragraph Punctuation**

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**Honolulu, HI**      **October 8-10, 2004**

For more details: [www.EclipseNT.com](http://www.EclipseNT.com)

## Wil's e-Tip

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### **xFilesDialog – Save Time Opening Transcripts & Finding Files**

Save yourself from the eyestrain that comes from trying to navigate tiny dialog boxes on large screens. These annoyingly small open-file dialog boxes waste a great deal of your time because of how difficult they make it to find anything. If you're trying to navigate through a lot of transcripts or job dictionaries, you have to keep scrolling and scrolling because the window is just too small.

Sure, you can resize file dialog boxes with your mouse to make them easier to work with, but then they revert back to their itty-bitty default size the next time you open them. What a hassle. So what can you do about it? Quite a lot! For about \$20 you can get a program called XFilesDialog that will help you make better use of your screen real estate, which means less scrolling. Go to <http://www.xfilesdialog.com/> and download a free trial copy and test drive it for 30days before paying your \$20 to register it and keep using it. It is free to give it a trial run.

XFilesDialog lets you permanently resize file dialog boxes exactly how you want them. You can even have it put the initial focus in file dialogs on the list itself. This means that your cursor will not be blinking on the file name so that you then have to click in the list box itself. Instead you'll be able to immediately start scrolling up and down through your list of files with the arrows and/or start typing the file name to immediately jump to the file you want to open.

On top of all of this, XFilesDialog puts on the dialog box's title bar pop-up menus that let you access favorite folders, as well as recently used folders and files making it much easier to navigate through your computer's entire file system getting those files opened much faster and more efficiently.

## Keith's e-Tip

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### **Enhanced Automated Paragraph Punctuation**

Here's a new feature that I think you'll love, especially if you're a reporter in courts or someone whose work involves a lot of Speaker paragraphs mixed in with Q&A.

Normally questions end with a question mark and answers end with a period. Eclipse knows this. So most of the time I don't even write STPH and FPLT for the question mark and period during regular Q&A. However, questioners can make statements, witnesses can ask questions, and questions can get asked during colloquy. Consider this short example:

Q. You can explain now.

A. Can't you understand?

MS. SMITH: Why are you asking?

During question paragraphs, I usually find the time to write a period if I need one. Likewise, during an answer I usually can squeeze in a question mark if necessary. Maybe that's because Q&A often occurs at a more deliberate pace than colloquy. At least attorneys try not to cut off a witness who is answering during a videotaped deposition or in the presence of a jury.

Colloquy can be rough. Colloquy is full of interruptions and questions. For colloquy I just figure I'm lucky to get all the words down; the punctuation gets corrected later.

With Total Eclipse 3.2, you can now take advantage of enhanced automated paragraph punctuation. So in the example given above, I would NOT need to write the period or question mark to have these paragraphs properly punctuated, as long as my dictionary contains these entries:

```
you can{>.  
can't you{>?  
why are{>?
```

In other words, if the phrase "why are" is in your steno dictionary, you now have a way of requesting an automatic question mark at the end of the paragraph in which you write "why are." Of course, you could still write in the question mark, but you would not have to. That can be really helpful when things get fast and furious.

As usual, this new feature includes a few built-in rules to guide the automation punctuation. The first rule is basically "first come, first served." Here's an example:

A. Can't you see that you can use this to make colloquy easier?

Here, "can't you{>?}" asks the paragraph to end in question mark; but "you can{>.}" asks the paragraph to end with a period. As you can see, the paragraph ends in a question mark. Why? Because "can't you{>?}" came first. Therefore, if other phrases like "you can{>.}" or "why are{>?}" come along, they're presumed to be secondary, dependent thoughts.

Now, bear with me here. There's a very important exception to this "first come, first served" principle. Here it is. If you write ANY punctuation mark before the end of your paragraph, the automatic punctuation request built into a dictionary entry like "why are{>?}" is canceled. (That only makes sense. If you actually write in a period or a question mark, you've made clear what punctuation you want.) Consider this example:

MS. JONES: You can understand our position, can't you?

Normally, "you can{>.}" would request this paragraph to end in a period. However, the comma after "position" cancels that request. This means that "can't you{>?}" is able to request the paragraph to end in a question mark. The end result is that this colloquy paragraph would end in a question mark, even if you didn't have time to write the question mark.

So what do you need for this to work?

First, you need Total Eclipse 3.2.

Second, you need two lines in your metadictionary so that {>.} and {>?} will be understood. Here are the lines for your metadictionary:

```
{>?}={/"?/?ATP}
{>.}={/"./?ATP}
```

Third, you need dictionary entries that take advantage of these features. Having individual entries for "why" and "are" would not tell Eclipse that the phrase "why are" is requesting a paragraph to end in a question mark. However, if "why are{>?}" is in your dictionary, Eclipse knows what you want.

Now, you may be thinking you'll have to add {>.} or {>?} to hundreds of dictionary entries to take advantage of this feature. For example, a simple phrase like "can't you" may be in your dictionary ten different ways, possibly as part of some conflict entries. Well, you could add one metadictionary line to support all the "can't you" entries in your steno dictionary. That metadictionary line would look like this:

```
can't you={/""%}{/"?/?ATP}
```

You can find a nice list of such phrases at the E-Tips page of my website, [www.KVincent.com](http://www.KVincent.com). Just go to the description for E-Tip #40, where you see it says: "Click here to download phrases to paste into your Metadictionary." When you see the list file open, press Ctrl A to highlight all the phrases, then press Ctrl C to copy. Then enter Eclipse, go to the User Settings dialog, and click on "Programming." Click on the drop-down arrow to select Metadictionary and place your cursor at the end of any line. After pressing the "Enter" key to create a new line, press Ctrl V to paste in the phrases that use enhanced automatic paragraph punctuation.

One last note. Back up your user settings before you add to your metadictionary. Why? If you decide that you do not like the way enhanced automatic paragraph punctuation works, you'll be able to just restore your user settings and go back to the way things used to be. With that safety net in place, you can have fun experimenting.

## The Fight Against Cancer

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We would like to thank each and every one of you for your contributions to the American Cancer Society, and for all the wonderful emails you sent. Together, we have contributed \$14,200.00 towards the fight against cancer.

If you have not yet donated and would like to donate \$5.00, you still can. Please go to the following link:

[https://www.cancer.org/asp/donate/don\\_multi\\_donate.asp?navToScreen=don\\_1](https://www.cancer.org/asp/donate/don_multi_donate.asp?navToScreen=don_1)

## Who Are We?

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**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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