



# THE RHODENIZER REPORT

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>SUPERSPEED USB 3.0 ARRIVES</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>NEW WI-FI STANDARD CAUSES PRICE DROPS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANTIVIRUS REVIEW: ESET NOD32</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>AT&amp;T MOVES TO END LANDLINES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXPLOSIVE WIRELESS GROWTH EXPECTED</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ABOUT RHODENIZER IT</b>	<b>4</b>

## SUPERSPEED USB 3.0 ARRIVES

The next step in "Universal Serial Bus" technology is USB 3.0, also called "SuperSpeed USB".

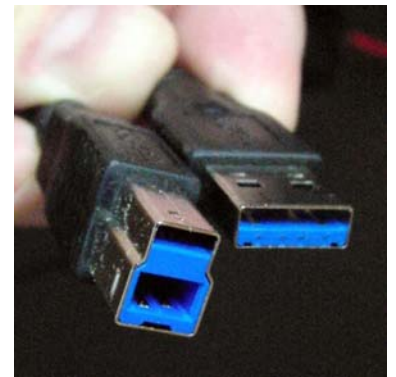
For those already familiar with USB, and USB 2, cable connections, USB 3 cables will have twice as many wires but the plug will be backwards compatible with USB 2. That means you can plug a USB 2 device into a USB 3 port and it will work. You can also plug a USB 3 device into a USB 2 port and it will work, but not as fast as it could run if both device and port are USB 3. But, you have to use the new cable for best results.

How fast is USB 3? We don't even have any devices yet that can come close to fully leverag-

ing the possible bandwidth of this new standard. The specification states transfer speeds of up to 4.8Gbps. Compare that to USB 2 at 480Mbps (which is only one tenth as fast). Even eSATA hard drives at 2.4Gbps can't compete with this.

Most printers and scanners already use less than the available bandwidth of USB 2, so no big differences will be noticeable there. External hard drive storage is where we will see the biggest impact. Also expect new USB thumb drive speeds to increase dramatically to take advantage of the new bandwidth available in USB 3 specs.

Beyond storage, there are many



uses for USB 3 in multimedia applications. Expect Plug-n-Play high definition video cameras and portable Blu-ray devices to emerge later in the year.

USB 3 is expected to be the new standard on all motherboards. And, add-on cards will be available as soon as March.

## THE TAKE-AWAY POINTS:

- **USB 3.0: Ten times faster than USB 2.0.**
- **Wireless "N" routers causing price wars.**
- **ESET antivirus can't wake a sleeping PC.**
- **Wireless carriers at max capacity while growth continues.**

## NEW WI-FI STANDARD CAUSES PRICE DROPS

Home wireless networks in the 2.4Ghz range began a few years ago with 802.11b technology. At only 11Mbps, it was soon overshadowed by the backward compatible 802.11g standard which delivers a theoretical 54Mbps (though I've rarely seen connections faster than 32Mbps in the real world).

Now, the 802.11n standard for Wi-Fi is ratified and complete. Promising up to 144Mbps and

able to use both 2.4Ghz and the 5Ghz frequency band, it's causing the competitive market with mature products to heat up considerably.

The new "N" wireless routers not only promise faster speeds, but longer range and better performance due to the MIMO multiple antenna designs. This leaves current "G" technology vendors rushing to clear out inventory by dropping prices.

There is nothing wrong with "G" devices, and most home users will still find them to be the best choice for use with their existing "G" network devices.

With designs coming soon from chipset companies like Quintana - promising up to 600Mbps performance in the next generation of Wi-Fi networks, further price drops on all "G" devices by the end of this year is almost certain.

## AT&T MOVES TO END LANDLINES

On Dec. 21st, AT&T filed a request with the FCC proposing that the nation's aging landline telephone network be phased out and replaced with new broadband VoIP services.

In the letter, AT&T requested a "National Broadband Plan" and stated that the transition is already underway. Each day, more and more communications services migrate to broadband and IP-based services, leaving the public switched telephone, and plain-old telephone service as relics of a "by-gone era."

It argued that since 99 % of Americans have wireless coverage today, and since 86% are wireless subscribers, most people no longer need a landline phone. In fact, over 700,000 landline phones are being disconnected every month.

Under AT&T's proposal, the federal government would regulate all high-speed broadband access just as they currently regulate telephone service. That means the government would have to make access to wireless, or high-speed broadband, as

affordable for low-income families as landline service currently is.

It went on to say that the government's goal of 100 % broadband Internet access is in reach only if resources are moved away from POTS and the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). Otherwise, "Congress's goal of universal access to broadband will not be met in a timely or efficient manner if providers are forced to continue to invest in and maintain two different networks," AT&T said in the filing.

**"In fact, over 700,000 landline phones are being disconnected every month."**

## ANTIVIRUS REVIEW: ESET NOD32

I've heard lots of good things from the IT community about the ESET NOD32 antivirus over the past couple of years, but never had a chance to work with it until recently. Over the Christmas holiday, I installed this latest version on my new 64 bit system running Windows 7 Professional and ran some tests.

I didn't try to intentionally expose my PC to viruses to see how well it would survive because there are labs that do that periodically and publish their results. One of the most respected independent testers in the industry is [www.av-comparatives.org](http://www.av-comparatives.org).

For my purposes, I wanted to see how well it would work

for the average user and here are my findings:

First, the good news. I found the program to be relatively light on system resources (meaning it doesn't drag down PC performance as much as most other AV programs) and the interface is very simple and easy to use. Advanced users can still go behind the curtain and configure some settings, but not as much as with Kaspersky.

Next, the bad news. It cannot wake the PC to run scheduled scans at night. I contacted ESET technical support for an explanation, but the only reply I received was just a confirmation of what I had already found—the pro-

gram does not wake the PC to run scheduled scans.

To get around this, I scheduled my own task to wake the PC and run backups every night at an earlier time. Estimating when it should finish, I then scheduled the antivirus program to run a scan immediately afterwards before the PC could go back to sleep. It works, but still... if Kaspersky can wake the PC, ESET should be able to - unless it was a conscious choice by the developers not to allow it.

Aside from this shortcoming, I found NOD32 to be a good choice for antivirus protection. However, Kaspersky AntiVirus 2010 still remains the favorite.—C. R..



## QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX

**Q– “I installed Kaspersky's Anti-Virus 2010 on our three computers late last week. Since then, our computers seem to be running a good bit slower. Any thoughts or suggestions on this?”**

A– The only time it should be noticeable is when it's running a scan, or an update, in the background. Check the settings to ensure updates and scheduled scans take place during off-hours. You can also disable virus scanning for outgoing e-mail attachments. That sometimes holds up outgoing e-mails for a while if there's a large attachment.

Check the Task Manager when it seems to be running slow to see if it's really Kaspersky, or some other process taking up more resources than normal. The "avp" process is one that Kaspersky uses and it's normal to find two instances of it running at any given time. Each instance may use from 5,000K to 15,000K memory when nothing much is going on. If you see a lot more than that, it's doing something.

Also, make sure you are not running any firewall software on your PC. If the AVP process finds it's outgoing port being blocked by something, it will continue to search within a certain range for an open port to get out through. That could slow the PC down also.

Of course, there will always be some overhead associated with running any anti-virus program in the background. But, it should not be that noticeable unless it's busy doing something. If those PC's had no protection before this, I would run an additional scan with MalwareBytes to see if it finds any malware already lurking in there that Kaspersky didn't flag when you installed it.

**Q– “What are my options for calendar sharing between co-workers in my office?”**

A– If you want each user to use the calendar features in Outlook, you can either setup your own Microsoft Exchange server and create a mailbox for each user, or subscribe to a service that hosts mailboxes for you on a remote Exchange server like “www.mailstreet.com” or AppRiver Hosted Exchange.

There is also a third party plug-in for Outlook called Share-O (“www.shareo.com”) that does calendar sharing in a peer-to-peer networking way that I'm not a big fan of.

If you're open to trying something new, checkout Google's shared web-based calendar at “www.google.com/calendar”. It's free, and it's accessible from home, the office, or anywhere you can connect to the Internet. No special software required.

**Q– “I've been getting a lot of SPAM e-mail lately. I click the link to “unsubscribe”, but it seems I just get even more. What can I do to stop these?”**

A– Those who comply with the 2003 U.S. CAN-SPAM Act send e-mails with their address, phone number, and “opt-out” information. They generally don't want any trouble and will be glad to honor your request to be removed from their list. Companies selling a legitimate product or service do not want to appear to be hiding anything.

However, some SPAM e-mails have cryptic-looking links that they want you to click on, but no information about them is included. You have no idea who they are or how to contact them. The wording may also have spelling and grammatical errors. In that case, don't click on anything. Just delete it. If you can't identify who sent it, don't trust anything about it. By clicking on the unsubscribe link, you just verify that a live person is at that e-mail address, so more SPAM is likely to follow.

SPAM filtering options are available through your e-mail service, and Kaspersky Internet Security has good SPAM filtering ability as well. Just go to the “Cliff's Pick's” page of my website for more info.

**E-mail your questions to:**  
[AskCliff@Rhodenizer.com](mailto:AskCliff@Rhodenizer.com)



**“If you can't identify who sent it, don't trust anything about it.”**

## EXPLOSIVE WIRELESS GROWTH EXPECTED

With the enormous number of smartphones and mobile broadband laptop adapters connecting to the Internet, wireless carriers have been caught off guard in many parts of the world. Staggering growth in sales has been surprising, especially in the current economy.

Wireless carriers around the world are also reporting tremendous growth in data traffic across their networks. AT&T says its network load has been growing by 4.5x per year for the last two years.

A recent study by Cisco reports that mobile wireless traffic overall is doubling every 9 months. By 2014, mobile devices are expected to send and receive more data in one month than in the entire year of 2008.

75% of this traffic will be attributed to Internet access, while nearly all the rest will be due to music and video streaming, the GSM Association recently said.

Just for comparison purposes, it's interesting to note that a 3G equipped laptop

can generate 15 times the traffic of an iPhone or BlackBerry, and as much traffic as 450 cell phones.

As demand continues to rise for wireless Internet access, carriers are under pressure to invest more money in infrastructure upgrades to handle this explosive growth.

In an economy where most corporations regard capital spending with great caution, wireless carriers like AT&T and Verizon have plans to invest billions in expansion and upgrade projects.



## ABOUT RHODENIZER IT

We are a different kind of IT service provider. We don't resell any hardware or software. We find the best deals on what you need and pass the savings along to you.

Our mission is to help small businesses reduce expenses, increase productivity, and safeguard private information.

It's about more than just fixing computers. We also

provide IT consulting and services that include finding the best solutions to your business problems.

We work with clients to prepare disaster recovery plans that ensure their critical data remains safe, yet easily accessible. Additional benefits include money-saving ideas for managing your computer resources and planning for future business expansion.

We have the training, experience, and know-how to provide the right solutions for your needs, and your budget.

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Tell me about your computer needs or IT issues. I'll recommend a course of action that makes sense for your situation at no cost to you. What have you got to lose?

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