

December 2017



Gizmoe



This is the seventh and last edition of *Gizmoe* in 2017.

Gizmoe will also be posted on www.seniornet.co.nz from 12 December 2017.

It's December, for many of us it's the opportunity to reflect on the eleven months previous, our achievements, joy and sadness and for SeniorNetters a time to catch our breath and remember how far we have travelled with technology. It's also a time to thank all the volunteers who gave their time and energy to helping others at a SeniorNet Learning Centre. We are so fortunate to have such an amazing group of dedicated people (over 600) who freely give their time to help run their centre, we tip our hats to them and to the tutors who with great patience help others grasp the wonders of new technology – we thank them all.

In my November edition of *Gizmoe* I mentioned I was trying to get a meeting with the New Minister for Seniors – Tracey Martin. I am happy to report we have met. The Minister was well briefed about the value of SeniorNet and that during the term of the previous government our funding had been removed due to a shift in education priorities. I was enthused to have the minister agree to “do her best” to keep to the pre-election commitment to help fund our organisation. The process is for the minister to submit a budget request on our behalf and for her to press our case. I am confident the Minister will “do her best”. For sure its early days yet, but having a Minister as an advocate of SeniorNet with an understanding that we are more than just an education provider is a positive step for us. I took the opportunity to invite the Minister to speak at our Symposium in May and without hesitation she accepted.

When reviewing the learning activity at our Centres it is clear that the emerging trend of shorter workshops rather than several week courses has now well and truly set in place. Your Federation is taking this on-board and will be reviewing its funding criteria early in 2018 to accommodate this to help centres fund sessions that match this change.

Enjoy the festive season, grasp any new technology that may appear in your Christmas stocking and.....

Remember, learn something new every day!

Grant Sidaway Executive Officer.



Gosh you can talk!

Kiwis are up there with the best natterers' in the world. Figures are yet to be collated for this year but in 2016 we chatted for more than 8 billion minutes on mobiles last year – not surprisingly that's nearly four times the amount we did 10 years ago

2016 was also the first year we talked more on our mobiles than we did on landlines. The number of people with a home phone continued to decrease, Commerce Commission data showed.



The commission's annual Telecommunication Monitoring report recorded a steady rise in the number of mobile phones being used by New Zealanders in the past decade, rising by 2 million mobile connections since 2006 to 5.8 million. We are certainly part of the worldwide trend toward portable communications – there are more active mobile phones in the world than the entire population of the world!

On those phones we talked for 8.16 billion minutes - that's 360 million hours, nearly 6 million days. The figures captured both residential and business connections.

Landline use, or fixed-access lines used only for voice calls, continued to decline.

The number of connections in homes fell by nearly a quarter in just three years to just under 200,000 last year.

Average mobile calling in New Zealand reached 118 minutes per connection per month.

There are moves afoot for telecommunication companies here in New Zealand to migrate as many people as possible from Landlines to mobile connections. Of course, that requires good mobile phone coverage and sad to say that whilst we have over 90% 3G or 4G coverage many rural parts do not – this may well always be the case. So, my advice is – when the phone company calls (generally at dinner time!!) offering great deals to shift you to a complete mobile service just be sure you have adequate coverage before committing. Remember “they” can't force you to change. On a more positive note, if you have good mobile phone coverage you might find the change exceptionally better on the pocket.

Want to write a book but can't type

We've heard about websites that translate between languages (like Google Translate for example), and even websites about publishing (or self-publishing). But what if you had a book idea, didn't know how to type or could not afford a decent typist?

Then maybe, these websites I found could do the job: one is called TalkTyper, you just need Google chrome (internet browser) and a microphone and away you go. SeniorNet Upper Hutt had a go and found it very good.



The first button to click on, looks like a microphone. At this point it will ask if you “give permission” to use the microphone. If you are worried about privacy, click on “block” and don't use this site.

But if you feel happy about continuing, click on “Allow” and then start dictating your book idea. Some of the symbols on the right-hand side, are: copy to clipboard, print, and options for using Email or Twitter, or translating into another language.

Even Google Translate will allow for a microphone, and almost real-time conversation between different languages can be done.

The second site I found, and was a bit of a laugh with the group, is called Over-the-top, a simulation of the old-style typewriters. Before they had electric etc. Believe it or not, this site allows for the old problems in a typewriter, of missing letters, faint letters (when the ribbon gets a bit dry) – and the option of changing the ribbon colour!

Here's a link to a video that demos it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zN0cEoGb6zo>

Thanks to Stu Mountjoy from Upper Hutt SeniorNet for this article

Online Learning – a way to extend our reach! Bruce Smart – SeniorNet South

A number of learning centres throughout the country are at locations surrounded by rural areas, making it difficult for people to travel to a Centre, or are on farms with time constraints that make this difficult. Others have from time to time experienced difficulty in finding tutors or getting tutors to learn about new technologies.

A possible solution to this could be setting up online learning courses or small video lectures suitable for inclusion in classes or workshops, reducing the need for tutors to present on topics with which they are not familiar. Obviously, such tutorials are available on YouTube, however in most cases these are presented in a way that presupposes that the student already has some, if not a good, knowledge with computers and therefore are not presented in perhaps the simplest way.



'Google Class' a program where online classes can be arranged was limited to people who subscribed to G-Suite at some cost, virtually limiting its use to teachers. This program is used by many schools throughout the country and it appears that it could be a good basis on which to set up Online classes adaptable to the needs of SeniorNet. Recently Google opened Google Class up for free to anyone.

At this stage the use of Google Class to SeniorNet has not been examined in depth, as it could take some time to research and learn and without an indication of take up by Learning Centres, it would be time wasted.

Again, the building up of a library of suitable material would be to say the least, time consuming and more than could be taken on by one person.

If a number of people throughout the country who would be willing to work on such a project in a collaborative manner could be found it would be possible to build a very strong resource for both Online Courses and Learning Centres alike. It is envisaged that this would involve identifying suitable and preferably free screen capture programs, although there are possibly a number who already use programs such as Camtasia or Snagit.

If you would be willing to assist in such a project, please contact Bruce Smart at: wildweka@gmail.com.

Every minute on the Internet

2017 This Is What Happens In An Internet Minute



When the Smartphone fails!

The faith we place in our Smartphones working at the swipe of our fingers is unbelievable. So much so that when they “misbehave” we are inclined to become zombie like. This I witnessed first-hand on Saturday 2 December when my Apple only wife experienced end of the world problems with her iPhone 6. The phone simply switched on and off during routine actions causing much frustration and anxiety. “Apple never fails” it must be something else!

As it turned out it was a bug in Apple's latest mobile software is causing some iPads and iPhones to crash.

The bug, which was related to notifications from third-party apps, is in iOS 11 and it caused problems as soon as the calendar changed to December 2.

Apple has fixed the problem by releasing iOS11.2 for iPads and iPhones, but for the best part of two days the normal “fix-it people” were also walking around in circles, unable to help.



If you have an iPhone or iPad and you are experiencing problems, go to Settings > General > Software update and the problem should disappear. Even if you haven't encountered the bug, it's a good idea to update your software – it may save you walking around in circles in the future!

The problem is the second recent bug from Apple after users discovered a problem in the latest Mac operating system. No doubt this will be causing much consternation at The Apple Campus in Cupertino, California as it certainly did in our house on 2 December!

Have you used Google Keep?

It's a free note taker.

Google Keep has a few features which make it simple and quick to use for everything from making just a quick note, perhaps something that you have to do or an item that you wish to recall at a later time, record a digital image and attach it to a note, a To Do list, a voice recorded message which will be translated into text and retained as an audio file.

Notes made on one device will seamlessly synchronise with all your devices and can also be shared with other people, should you wish to do so. Provided you have access to an internet connected computer you can have access to all your notes. It beats having sticky notes plastered all over your screen!

Notes can be made on a desktop or laptop using the keyboard or on mobile devices using the onscreen keyboard or by voice recording. Once you have a note it is a simple matter to attach a photograph from your gallery or to capture one with your devices camera if you wish to do so.

A title can be added to each note which can also be colour coded so that notes relating to a similar topic can all be readily identified and grouped. Important notes can be 'pinned' so that they always remain at the top of your listings and older notes can be archived so that you can recall them later if required.

Having made a note there is no need to save it as this is done automatically, removing that nagging question of did that save correctly or not.

There is no limit to the number of notes that you can have or limit to their length, but remember they do count against the total free storage that you get with your Google Account. However, it is probably true to say that normal note taking would use very little space, but attaching photographs would increase this.

Google Keep can be downloaded from the Play Store for Android or the Apple Store for iPads. To use it you will require a free Google Account which if you are using Gmail you will already have.

A couple of links to You Tube showing how to use Google Keep are:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKXC6nFA7z8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU0FEOhzikM&t=21s>

Article submitted by Bruce Smart – SeniorNet South – Thanks Bruce

Getting the G-up – Mobile networks – 5G

Our mobile phone network is in its fourth generation (4G), though some parts of the country can only access 3g and then there are parts that are 0G (no coverage).

Our supposed need for greater network speed and capacity, means telecommunication companies are now working on 5G, or the fifth-generation of wireless broadband technology.



Countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, South Korea and Japan, have announced bold plans to roll-out 5G next year, for us that it will be the early 2020's (perhaps)

5G will bring unprecedented network speeds, 1000 times faster than 4G, according to Huawei, the mobile phone company. The unique feature of 5G technology is its very high transmission frequency providing increased network speed.

5G network data will travel at 28 or 38 GHz, compared to the existing norm of 2.6 GHz. The higher the frequency, the faster is the network speed and capacity. However, a typical 5G base station can send its signal no further than 250m, according to the recent studies, which is approximately four times less than a 4G base station. The number of transmitters in our environment will increase considerably once 5G technology is rolled out.

From our perspective, 5G could be very helpful in addressing the erratic mobile connectivity across the country. It's ability to allow device-to-device communication means devices could exchange information without the need to go via a base station.

This direct communication between mobile phones is well suited for rural New Zealand, where setting up new base stations is too costly. So, maybe we will have a 100% mobile phone coverage after all?

Enjoy a happy and safe festive season

