

Technology

A Look at Recent Tech Happenings

Coca-Cola machine easier to hack than it appears

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Page Editor

Unfortunately, this article says nothing about how to trick a Coke machine into giving you a free soda, nor does it give information on how to get it to spit out quarters like a winning slot machine. Although that would be sweet, so far, no information has shown up on the internet (yet) on free quarters. However, this article does hold some pretty cool ways to show off your techie magic with some extremely unuseful information. But hey, it's kind of fun just to know more about Coke machines than the average 7/11 employee.

Most Coca-Cola machines since the 1990's can be hacked with a very simple

access code. The LED screen will show off all kinds of pointless information like past refrigeration errors, total cash intake, how many sales its made, and (if you choose the right machine) the current inside temperature.

First, find a Coke machine. Yes, it has to be a machine with Coke products, not Pepsi. It can contain anything from actual soda to Powerade, just as long as it holds Coke products. Next, check whether the LED screen reads something like "Ice Cold Cokes." If it simply displays the price, the following might not work.

Enter the access code. Typically this access code is 4231. This is the default code, and some companies change theirs, but there is usually little point, so few bother. To

actually punch in the access code, you use the soda buttons. Here is how:

- On a regular machine, with one column of soda buttons, button 1 is the top selection, button 2 is the second one from the top, and so on.
- If it's in a grid, the top left selection is button 1, button 2 is the one to the right of that, and so on.

After typing in the access code, a menu should appear on the LED screen. Scroll through this menu to find the information. When you type in the access code, it will probably pop up "EROR" (sic). Don't freak out. This is okay. On some machines, it might display a number. Either way is acceptable. You did it right. Here's a key to navigate through the menu:

- Button 1 returns to the pervious menu or exits the menu and goes back to the normal mode.
- Button 2 scrolls up though the selections
- Button 3 scrolls down
- Button 4 selects the displayed menu options

You will use these buttons to navigate through the menu options. Here are some example menu options that will probably be on the machine:



SALE: This allows you to see how many sales the machine has made. It works just like the CASH menu,

except the numbers reflect the number of beverages sold.

RTN or EXIT:

Obviously, this lets you exit the menu completely and return to the normal mode.

Now, if for some reason you need to exit quickly (such as when the vice principal is rounding the corner), press the coin return button.

This will shut the

menu down completely. Also, holding down this button on some machines will display the inner temperature.

Before you get flustered, know that owners and service people may have changed the access code. However, having one code makes it easy for anyone with a long round servicing machines. Also, the information is limited and fairly harmless.

Although not illegal, it is frowned upon by most store owners or vice principals that may be watching, so use caution and make sure you're following the law. Also, of course, don't do this if there's a line behind you. That's just annoying and no one wants to be that guy.

Vista offers nothing new to PC users

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Earlier this year, Microsoft released its latest operating system Windows Vista, but only after months of delays. After that long wait, most users have come to the conclusion that upgrading adds little to no value to usability or productivity, with most improvements, which are few, coming in the form of security.

Along with improvements to security comes the addition of the Aero Glass interface, a brand new 3D transparent Graphical User Interface or GUI. While it is surely beautiful, it does not come without a cost. The interface has very high system requirements which would require most people that did not buy a relatively high-end computer in the last year to buy a new computer and/or parts in order to fully utilize everything Aero Glass has to offer.

There are nine versions of Windows Vista to choose from. Microsoft released five different versions of Vista tailored to different types of users, with four also available as an upgrade; a cheaper deal if you already own Windows XP. The different versions include different features based on their price; the more features the higher the price. Courtesy of Microsoft.com, here are the different versions each with a short description:

Ultimate

Windows Vista Ultimate is the choice for those who want to have it all. Easily shift between the

worlds of productivity and play with the most complete edition of Windows Vista. Ultimate provides the power, security, and mobility features needed for work, and all the entertainment features that you want for fun.

Home Premium

Windows Vista Home Premium is the preferred edition for home desktop and mobile PCs. It provides a breakthrough design that brings your world into sharper focus while delivering the productivity, entertainment, and

security you need from your PC at home or on the go.

Home Basic

Windows Vista Home Basic is ideal for homes with basic computing

needs like e-mail, browsing the Internet, and viewing photos. Easy to set up and maintain, it enables you to quickly find what you're looking for on your PC and the Internet, while providing a more secure environment to help protect you from an unpredictable world.

Business

Windows Vista Business is the first edition of Windows designed specifically to meet the needs of small businesses. You'll spend less time on technology support-related issues—so you can spend more time making your business successful. Windows Vista Business is the definitive choice for your business today and tomorrow.

Enterprise

Designed to significantly lower IT costs and risks, Windows Vista Enterprise meets the needs of large, global organizations with complex IT infrastructures.

In the end, Microsoft's

Windows Vista has suffered a fate common to many things in the technology world: over-hype. For years, Microsoft had been trying to complete and release Vista. But in the last couple years of development, the best and most intriguing features that Microsoft boasted when it first announced the ambitious operating system were removed. People were expecting the best and all they got was an improvement. Certainly this would be a great operating system to be included with a new computer, but the improvements over Windows XP simply do not justify the extra cost.

Playlist Spotlight: Geoff Bingham

MIKE GORGONE

Entertainment Editor

"Lately I've been going through a lot of old [records] and have really expanded my listening library," Geoff Bingham, P.E. and geology teacher said.

Bingham was hired as a full time teacher this year after previously working

part time, substituting and student teaching at West Linn. The WLHS graduate also helps coach the wrestling team along with the Athey Creek Middle School wrestling team.

"It's essential that I listen to songs that kick ash," Bingham said. "Classic rock is a big part of any geologist's

playlist."

Ranging from the insanely obscure "Firehouse Five + Two" to the more mainstream "Led Zeppelin" and "Presidents of the United States," Bingham's playlist truly represents this man's diverse teaching range and ability to adapt to any situation.

