

East SIG Report – August 2020

After a 4 month hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, East SIG returned in August. Host Paul Woolard opened the meeting via the internet conferencing software Zoom, to a larger audience than our normal face to face meetings. It was good to see many old faces, some new faces and others who hid their faces. On my computers HD screen, the audience filled 2 screens, so I estimate an audience of around 50 attended the meeting. Holding the meeting using Zoom gave those members that don't wish to travel at night, or those that live too far away the chance to attend. However you do miss the fellowship that face to face meetings provide. Possibly alternating meetings when the pandemic is over could be an option.

The night's meeting commenced with **Dave Botherway** presenting a talk on the “Internet Impacts of COVID-19 and Zoom usage”. The presentation began by explaining how to use Zoom when attending a meeting as a guest. For those that haven't used Zoom before, the first step is to download and install the Zoom web browser client from <https://zoom.us/download>. Members who wanted to attend the meeting will have received an email from the host. The email will contain a brief agenda along with a meeting URL, a meeting ID and Passcode. Clicking on that URL will open Zoom, where you wait for the host to allow you in.

Firstly Dave recommended a few housekeeping details the audience should adhere to:

- Use a headset to minimize feedback.
- Mute your audio via the microphone icon on the bottom left or via the Space bar.
- If wishing to comment, use the “raise hand” icon. For large meetings where participants fill more than one screen using the “raise hand” icon was found to assist the host. For this meeting, the co-host was monitoring in “Participants View” and advised the host when someone wished to comment or had a question.

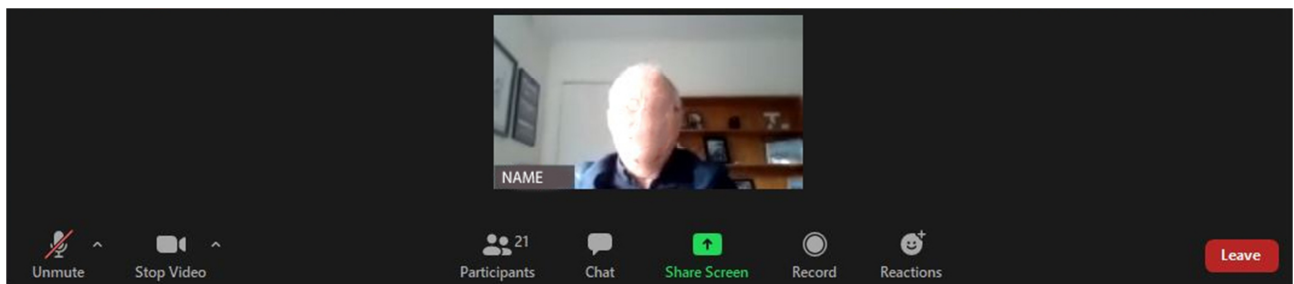


Figure 1 – Zoom toolbar (graphic from another SIG meeting)

When the Zoom window opens the toolbar at the bottom of the screen contains the most important settings guests will need. The Toolbar icons from left to right are:

- *Mute / Unmute* icon – Leave mic muted unless talking to minimize background noise.
- *Start Video* – Options include; Start video / select your camera / Choose a Virtual Background.
- *Participants* - Shows those attending meeting (you select “raise hand” from here. See page 2)
- *Chat* – Audience members can comment 1 on 1 or to everyone.
- *Share screen* – Shares content from your screen to everyone.
- *Record* – Sends a request to the host for you to record the meeting.
- *Reactions* – displays a clapping hand or thumbs up icon briefly on the top left of your screen image.
- *Leave* – Select to exit the meeting

The toolbar can be hidden by pressing the ALT key. If during presentations the toolbar obstructs the lower portion of a presentation, use the ALT key to hide the toolbar.

When selecting the “Participants” icon on the toolbar, the Participants panel shown in Figure 2 opens on the left side of the Zoom window. Here you and the host or co-host can monitor raised hands, view who has their microphones on & off and show those attending with videos on or off. Further options are available to the right of the raised hand as seen in Figure 2 but these were not discussed.

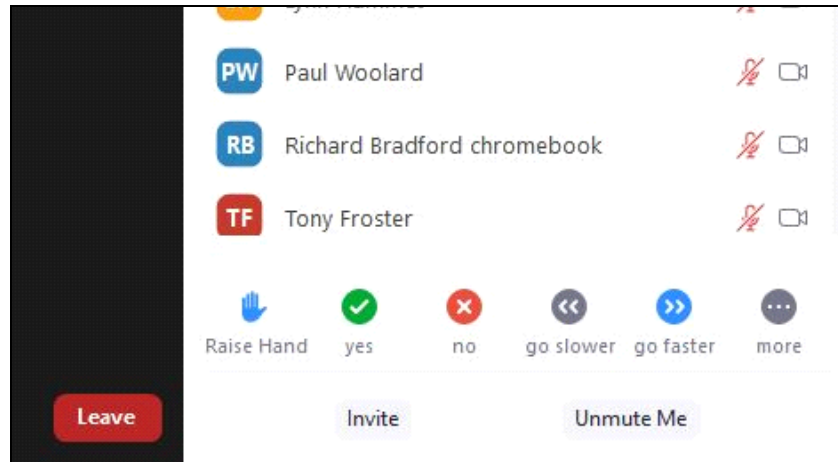


Figure 2 – Participants panel

On the top right of the Zoom window you’ll see the “Speaker / Gallery View” & “Maximise” icons. These are shown in figure 3 below with the Participants panel displayed.



Figure 3 – Speaker view icon

When the “Speaker View” icon is selected, it toggles between “Speaker View” and “Gallery View”. In Speaker view the person speaking will appear in a larger video window than the audience members. Its size will depend on the number of participants at the meeting. In large meetings Speaker View reduces the number of attendees that are displayed on a single screen.

Gallery View displays a small image of all participants in a grid pattern. (Refer Figure 1) The grid expands and contracts as participants join and leave the meeting. When someone is speaking, the frame around their grid image is highlighted. The number of participants that can be shown in the grid pattern is dependent of the resolution of the screen display. On my HD monitor the grid was 5 x 5 whereas on my Lenovo tablet it is 2 x 2.

The host’s role is more demanding and requires him to:

- Download, Register & Logon with a Personal ID on the Zoom app
- Decide Security – Passcode / Waiting Room
- Use a fixed URLs for repeating meetings as this simplifies future meetings.
- Setup a Co-Host – Dave highly recommends setting up a co-host for times when the host is delayed or is unable to attend. If the host is delayed the session cannot start.
- Block Screen Sharing while presenting
- Establish a ‘Speaker’ protocol with the audience
- Be ready for User ‘mistakes’ i.e. open mics
- Be ready for ‘Zoom Bombers’
- Monitor the time elapsed when using Zoom’s free version as it will time out after 40 Minutes.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the internet has been immense. With people staying home more, internet traffic has increased significantly. The main drivers are people working from home, home schooling, using the internet to replace face to face meetings, online shopping and using the internet for recreation. With more time at home, streaming video services Netflix, Stan etc., catch-up free to air TV, YouTube and social media have all driven up internet usage.

With Zoom proving more feature-packed and user friendly than Skype, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet, its use has soared. Dave presented a graph showing how Zoom usage went from 3 million to 25 million in 2 months. A second graph showed how Zoom's share price rose tenfold in 6 months.

Dave warned that many new scams have appeared along with the increase in internet usage. After highlighting a number of these risks, Dave outlined how we need to protect ourselves from them:

- Keep the Operating System and Anti-Virus up to date,
- Keep programs updated (e.g. Zoom)
- Keep backups and store these offsite if possible
- If working from Home use a VPN
- Beware of unsolicited emails, especially if children are using the internet
- Be aware of Bogus links and if in doubt, DON'T .

Once again this was another well researched and presented topic from Dave Botherway.

Paul Woolard followed with "Windows 10 Run Commands you should know". The advantage of using the Windows 10 run command is that you're able to reach parts of the operating systems configuration screens much quicker than navigating normally.

All the commands that follow require the Run dialogue box to be opened first, using the keyboard shortcut combination, Windows logo key (Win) + R. (Figure 4). The command you wish to run is then keyed into the Open box and then press Enter.

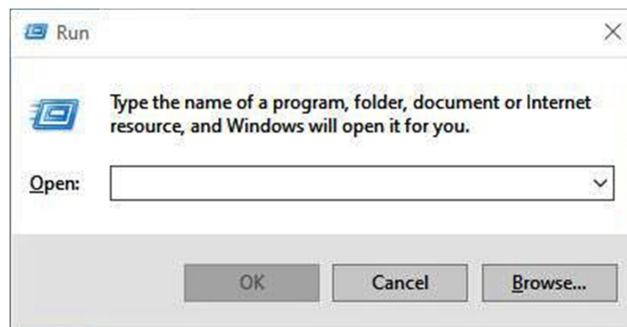


Figure 4 – The “Run” dialogue box

- Use the "\\" command (no quotes) to open File Explorers root folder (typically C:\).
- Use the "." to open the Home folder in File Explorer of the current user.
- Use the ".." to open the Home folder in File Explorer of the Users folder.
- Use "control" to open the Control Panel
- Use "msconfig" to open the System configuration app.
- Use "appwiz.cpl" to open the Programs and Features screen
- Use "cleanmgr" to open the Disk Cleanup utility
- Use "resmon" to open the Resource Monitor utility
- Use "calc", "notepad", "mspaint", etc. to open common Microsoft apps
- Use "main.cpl" to adjust your mouse settings
- Use "mstsc" to open Remote Desktop
- Use "msinfo32" to access System Information.

Paul followed with a list of his most useful Windows logo keyboard (Win) shortcuts.

- Win + D Show the Desktop
- Win + M Minimize all windows
- Win + L Lock your computer or switch users
- Win + R Open the Run dialogue box
- Win + T Cycle through programs on the Taskbar
- Win + number Starts the program pinned to the Taskbar in its numbered position.
- Win + V Open the Clipboard app
- Win + Up Arrow Maximize the window
- Win + Left Arrow Maximize the window to the left side of the screen
- Win + Right Arrow Maximize the window to the right side of the screen
- Win + Down Arrow Minimize the window
- Win + Home Minimize all but the active window
- Win + Shift + Up Arrow Stretch the window to the top and bottom of the screen
- Win + Shift + Left Arrow Move a window from one monitor to another
- Win + Shift + Right Arrow Move a window from one monitor to another
- Win + P Choose a presentation display mode
- Win + U Open Ease Of Access Centre
- Win + X Open the context menu for the Start button
- Win + Ctrl + M Open the Magnifier app

Both of the above lists are available from TechRepublic, <https://www.techrepublic.com/> a website Paul recommends members visit and subscribe to their regular computer-related newsletter.

Following Paul's presentation, **George Skarbek** commenced his usual Q&A segment. As no one was brave enough to ask a question, George added further comments to Paul's Win key commands topic. George uses the "Shortcut Guide" tool in Windows PowerToys as its saves him from having to remember each command. Once installed, PowerToys adds an icon to the system tray. This icon is where you access each tool and make changes to their settings. There are currently 8 different tools in PowerToys. To use the "Shortcut Guide" tool in PowerToys, hold down the Windows Logo key until an overlay of all the Window Logo key shortcuts appears. From here you run the command you're after.

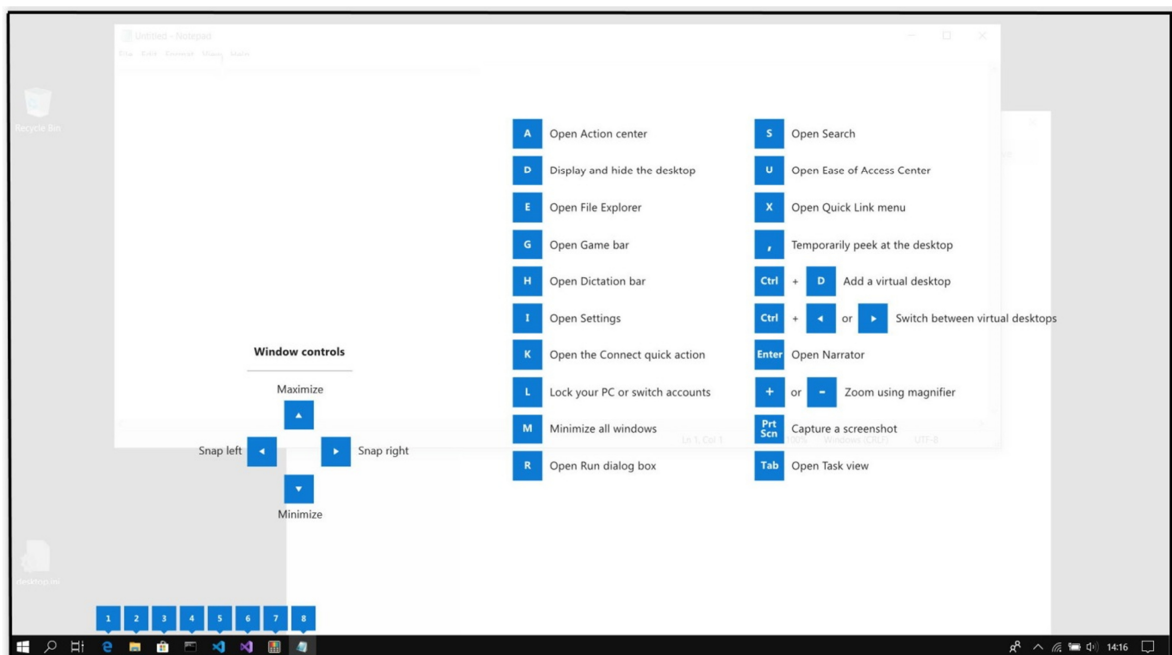


Figure 5 - Windows PowerToys "Shortcut Guide" tool

Microsoft purchased Windows PowerToys in 2018 and the program can be downloaded from <https://github.com/microsoft/PowerToys>. A short YouTube video giving a brief introduction to PowerToys can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vpcaTA9y20>

George noted that many MelbPC meetings are beginning to be held via Zoom and many look like being held that way for some time to come. As a result MelbPC have purchased Zoom licences for a number of SIGs to use. George strongly recommended those members who may not have been able to attend some SIGs previously, go to their MelbPC dashboard and sign-up to receive reminders for those SIGs. If those SIGs are meeting via Zoom, the reminders will outline topics for discussion and show the Zoom meeting URL. George then asked Paul to demonstrate how easy it is to sign up to these reminders from the dashboard. After Paul demonstrated how to add a SIG to his reminders list, the meeting was closed.

From the Zoom meetings I've attended to date, I've noticed a less obvious advantage over those mentioned earlier. After first time Zoom presenters resolved the intricacies of using Screen Sharing with an open microphone, presentations by members from home, in a familiar environment and using their own equipment ran better and smoother. Brief demonstrations particularly, seemed to benefit from presenting at home.

Neil Muller