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[Web Tips 101]   *by Vivian Tran*

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Got a question about the Web? Click here to Ask Viv!

"Web Tips 101" is a weekly column to provide basic and useful information that will help improve your interactive Web experience.

How to customize your browser

(Oct. 2, 2008) Viewing websites on a browser such as Internet Explorer can be tricky, especially if you find that the web pages do not seem to fit inside your window or the font size seems too small. By adjusting features, such as the screen resolution, the screen size and default font size, you can improve your web viewing experience. Here are three useful tips on how you can customize and control your Internet Explorer window to view web pages:

Screen Resolution

New computer monitors/screens typically have screen resolutions set at 1024 x 768 pixels or even higher, by default. This is to give the maximum effect for graphics and computer games. Many computer users however still use old monitors with a screen resolution of 800 x 600 pixels.

To change the resolution on your monitor/screen:

- Step 1: With no programs or windows open, press on the right-hand button of your computer mouse. A menu will appear.

- Step 2: Click on Properties, and another window will appear entitled Display Properties.

- Step 3: Click on the word Settings at top right.

- Step 4: The window will change. Look for a box that reads: "Screen area or resolution." You'll see a sliding scale. Beneath this you will see the present setting, i.e.1024 by 768 pixels. Using the left button of your mouse, click just to the left of the downward pointing arrow and the resolution will change. Set it to 800 x 600 pixels. (You also can pull the scale one unit to the right and see what happens.)

- Step 5: Don't panic if your screen goes black for a second. Click on OK.

- Step 6: A small window will open, again called Display Properties, with the message that Windows will now resize your Desktop. Click on OK and the screen will go black (remember not to panic). After a few moments your Desktop will reappear with the icons etc. looking much bigger. (If your computer operating system is XP, you finish here.) If you are using an old operating system like Windows 98, the same Display Properties will be showing, with a small window that prompts: "You resized your Desktop. Do you want to keep these settings?"

- Step 7: Click on Yes and the screen will go black again for few moments (again, do not panic). You have now resized your monitor/screen settings. To revert to your original settings just follow the procedure above changing the pixels size to what you want.

Switch to Full Screen

You can increase the size of your IE window. This feature will hide the menu bar, toolbars, and address bar at the top of your screen. The full screen mode also will hide the status bar and taskbar at the bottom of your screen. This will make better use of a small screen by hiding items temporarily.

- Step 1: Press *F11* key to turn Full Screen view on and off.

Choose your default font size

Some Internet users prefer to crank up the font size for easier reading. Fortunately, you can control about 75 percent of the font sizes you see on the web by following these simple two steps:

- Step 1: Click *View* menu, *Text Size*.

- Step 2: Choose the Larger or Smaller font sizes until you can easily read the web page. Medium is common.

Note: Web pages that use "style" formats or Flash or graphic fonts will not be affected by this command. Only those web pages that use regular HTML body text.