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Final project: Portable Apps (8 points)

I replaced an old 64MB jump drive with a 512 MB Memorex “Mini TravelDrive” that uses a U3 Smart interface. (I got this jump drive from a clearance sale at Kmart for \$12.) This additional functionality only works on Windows XP and Windows 2000 Service Pack 4. On Windows 98 SE, Me, 2000, and Mac OS 8.6+, it only function as a storage device.

The plug-and-play aspect worked fine at home and at work, but not on the log-in computers in the campus labs. The drive puts an icon in the system tray and includes a Flash introduction. By using the U3 Launchpad (the desktop manager that handles the software programs on the device), I could easily get to the additional functions, including the U3 Download Central, where I downloaded these portable applications:

FireFox: I really like FireFox’s tabs and its noticeably fewer spyware instances.

FoxIt Reader: a PDF reader that is much smaller than Adobe Reader, doesn’t require installation, and launches instantly without splash windows

EditPad Lite: Similar to Microsoft Notepad. It has Tips of the Day and can read any document by using the Encoding item in the Convert menu.

OpenOffice: I have only created a few documents with Open Office, but I like its layout and friendlier icons/graphics.

IrfanView: This claims to be “a very fast, compact and innovative FREEWARE image viewer/converter for Windows, and I’m a believer after playing with it some. I always want to look a picture files quickly, then be able to do a quick crop or effect on them. IrfanView seems to combine the quickness of Windows Picture Viewer with some of the functionality of Photoshop or Paint with features like slideshow, custom crop, text, redeye, effects, grayscale, and multipage images.

You can set any programs to start up automatically when you insert the jump drive. I have been using this drive as my main source that I keep with me, and synchronizing it to my home and work computers using the included Migo synchronizing software.

I included screenshots on the next page:

