

Executive Stress

TM

OFFICE SUPPORT

"Professional Assistance for the 21st Century Professional!"

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Newsletter

Welcome!

FIRST OF ALL, apologies for the absence of a September quarter newsletter. What a year we've had in my household! Unfortunately most of it medical. September saw me in and out of hospital a couple of times ... thank you to those clients who were affected and were so understanding of the predicament I was in. All's well again now - I think!

On a more positive note, we've also been busy around our house with renovations just in time for the holidays. A great big new deck now spans two sides of our house - if you're looking for a carpenter I have just the bloke! He did an amazing job - so much so that people driving by actually stopped and asked him to pop round to their place to do a quote! We'll also be getting the place (including the deck) painted - hopefully before the holidays.

We're also doing our bit for the water shortage crisis in Queensland - we've just installed a 3420L water tank which should go some way towards helping us keep our new vege garden alive! As you can see ... it's been busy at our place for a range of reasons!

We're entering the silly season now and many of you are probably planning a well-earned break. Hopefully by now you have all of your corporate cards organised, and any gifts to special clients should be ordered by now for pre-Christmas delivery. If not, let us know and we can see if we can help out. Next year our September quarter newsletter will give you a bit more notice!

In the spirit of the season - and having regard in particular to the most recent threat to Australia - I thought the following quote gives us all something to ponder at this time.

"The fool says in his heart: 'There is no God'. But there is another type of fool, more dangerous and sure of himself, who says in his heart and proclaims to all the world: 'There is no God but mine'."

Joseph Campbell, *Creative Mythology*.

Merry Christmas, blessed Yule/Litha/Midsummer; happy Hanukah, Kwanzaa, and Eid ul Fitri!

Till next quarter!

Virtually yours

Lyn P.B



PC Cleanup ...

IT'S THE END OF THE YEAR. When was the last time you gave your PC a really good clean up? Got rid of unused programs? Defragged? Deleted temp files? Well, you should actually be doing this frequently through the year, but the slow down over the holiday season is a good time to clear out the clutter. Here are some tips for starting the new year with a tidier - and potentially faster - PC!

Removing Programs

First of all try going into the list of programs in your Start-Programs menu. Sometimes programs will have an uninstall feature -

and you should uninstall from here first.

If there is no uninstall feature, you'll need to go into your Control Panel (access this through Start-Settings-Control Panel). Open the Add/Remove Programs icon where you'll see an alphabetical listing of programs that Windows can remove from your system. Click the one you want to remove and click Change/Remove.

If neither of these options works you can go to the program's folder and delete it - however a word of warning. There is no guarantee the program was confined to that folder. It could have other files distributed through your computer - so our advice is to avoid this option unless you're a

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guru on the PC!

Sometimes you may get a message telling you that shared files were found that are not needed by other programs and can be removed. It's best to leave them on your system because these .dll files might be needed after all and if you remove them you'll start having problems with other programs that do require them.



Deleting Temp Files

This is truly something that should be done every other day! If you don't get around to it though, now's the time.

Right click your My Computer icon and click Search...

The files/folders you're looking for have the following extensions: .tmp .bak or start with this symbol: ~ So in the "Search for files or folders named" box type:

.bak,*.tmp,~*.

You'll only want to look in your hard drives so from the Look In drop down box select those drives. Also make sure that you select that you want to search subfolders and slow files. Then click Search.

If you haven't done this for some time it may take a while! Once the search is over simply highlight the results (click-Shift-click) and delete. We'd recommend not emptying your trash until you start up your PC again and are sure no programs are dysfunctional. That way you can Restore the deleted file/folder to get things running again. If things go well for the next day or two - empty the trash!

Defragmenting

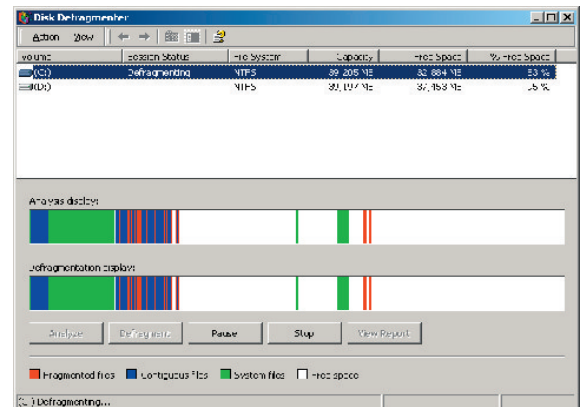
Defragging basically means optimising a disk by unfragmenting files. It can take quite some time - particularly if you haven't done it regularly - so you may need to do this overnight if it's the first time you've ever done it.

When you delete programs from your hard drive you leave empty spaces where pieces of the program were inserted during installation. When you load a new program, the computer goes to the first available spot to place all the parts, so your program could be loading pieces all over the place. This causes the hard drive to hunt all over to access all the pieces when you run the program, causing delays in performance. Fragmentation isn't serious but results in speed problems.

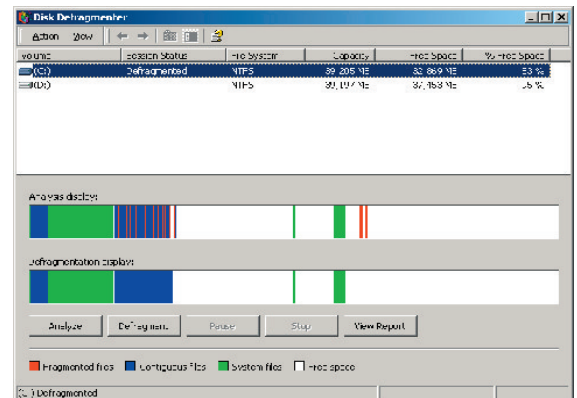
Windows comes with a system tool for defragging called, funnily enough, Disk Defragmenter! You'll find it under the Start Menu-Programs-Accessories-System Tools-Disk Defragmenter. (Tip: turn off your screen saver before running Defragmenter.) When you click this a window appears allowing you to choose which of your hard drives you'd like to defragment (if you have more than one). Highlight the drive - usually (C:) - and click the Defragment button. You'll then be given a display of the defragmentation in progress - red generally indicates fragmented files; white is

How long has the VA industry been around? Only about 8 or 9 years, around about the time the internet began to be used for business. But the term Virtual Assistant (VA) only came into common usage around 1998.

free space; green are system files; and blue are contiguous files. The idea is you want to eliminate the red lines and bring contiguous files together into closer proximity. Your system files won't move.



The above shows a defrag in progress. Below shows the drive fully defragmented.



Critical Patch for XP...

IF YOU HAVE automatic updates turned on in your Windows XP environment, chances are you've already been patched for this Windows flaw that can affect Office users.

The problem is labeled "Vulnerabilities in Graphics Rendering Engine Could Allow Code Execution" which sounds pretty obscure. The most common way for this flaw to be exploited is through an email in Outlook or an Office document. In fact any program that displays an image can be misused - which explains why Microsoft ranked this update "Critical".

Not all images can be used to hack into your system, just Windows Metafile (WMF) and Enhanced Metafile (EMF) image formats in this case.

If you don't have automatic updates on then open Internet Explorer then Tools-Windows Update. You can see if the patch is installed by going to Control Panel |

Add/Remove Programs, and choose Show Updates at the top is necessary. Scroll down to the Windows XP software updates and look for 'Security Update for Windows Xp (KB896424)'.

Details at <http://office-watch.com/kb/?896424>

The patch is for all versions of Windows XP, Windows Server 2003, Small Business Server 2000 or 2003 plus Windows 2000 with Service Pack 4.

Bird Flu Trojan ...

IT HAD TO HAPPEN! Whilst worms, trojans and viruses embedded in Word documents are nothing new, Naiva.A is topical.

The email arrives with the subject line of:

- Outbreaks in North America; or
- What is Avian Influenza (bird flu)?

The Word document attached to this email passes itself off as containing information about the bird flu epidemic, however contains a macro that puts the Ranky.FY trojan on your computer. It can



also create, delete or modify files. It does not spread automatically by its own means - meaning it needs an attacking user's intervention in order to reach the affected computer. Means of transmission include floppies, CDs, email, internet downloads, FTP, IRC channels, peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing networks, etc.

It has a threat level of "low".

However, it's worth a reminder to be vigilant with your efforts against trojans, worms and viruses. Be careful about any documents you receive - by email, network transfer, instant message attachment, CD or floppy.

Always check incoming documents with your anti-virus software (ensuring it has updated definitions) regardless of who sends you the document or how it is delivered.

You'll know you have a suspect document if when you open it you receive a warning message indicating the document contains macros (if your security level is set to Medium); or the document won't open (if your security level is set to High or Very High), as the

macro won't run.

World's Top 45 Oxymorons

speech by which a locution produces an incongruous, seemingly self-contradictory effect" - er, okay ... it'll become clearer!):

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 45. Act naturally | 27. Butt Head | 9. Political science |
| 44. Found missing | 26. Military Intelligence | 8. Tight slacks |
| 43. Resident alien | 25. Software documentation | 7. Definite maybe |
| 42. Advanced BASIC | 24. New classic | 6. Pretty ugly |
| 41. Genuine imitation | 23. Sweet sorrow | 5. Twelve-ounce pound cake |
| 40. Airline food | 22. Childproof | 4. Diet ice cream |
| 39. Good grief | 21. "Now, then ..." | 3. Working vacation |
| 38. Same difference | 20. Synthetic natural gas | 2. Exact estimate |
| 37. Almost exactly | 19. Passive aggression | 1. Microsoft Works |
| 36. Government organisation | 18. Taped live | |
| 35. Sanitary landfill | 17. Clearly misunderstood | |
| 34. Alone together | 16. Peace force | |
| 33. Legally drunk | 15. Extinct Life | |
| 32. Silent scream | 14. Temporary tax increase | |
| 31. Living dead | 13. Computer jock | |
| 30. Small crowd | 12. Plastic glasses | |
| 29. Business ethics | 11. Terribly pleased | |
| 28. Soft rock | 10. Computer security | |

From 45 to 1 here are the world's top 45 oxymorons ("a figure of



A satellite view of Hurricane Wilma!