

BlackBerry blackouts' aim for work-life balance



It may be wishful thinking, but a Canadian government ministry has sent out a directive to its employees urging them to relax and not use their BlackBerry smartphones at night or on weekends and holidays.

Trying to re-establish a proper balance between work and life, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which manages immigration and resettlement services for the government, is starting by trying to cut the chains to what some have called CrackBerrys.

The department's deputy minister, Richard Fadden, sent out a memo asking employees to implement a BlackBerry "blackout" between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. and on weekends and holidays.

"Work/life quality is a priority for me and this organization because achieving it benefits us both as individuals and as a department," Fadden wrote.

"When we can 'balance' our work and personal responsibilities, we, as a team, stand to not only serve and perform more effectively, but also to attract and keep employees to help us build a stronger Canada."

BlackBerrys, made by Canadian-based Research In Motion, are handheld communication devices that can be used to send e-mails and make phone calls--thus allowing people to bring the office to their homes, vehicles, or even the ski slopes.

They have become an essential workplace tool in politics, business, and the professions.

Fadden also asked employees not to use BlackBerrys during meetings and also not to schedule meetings over lunch.

"I expect that some of you will consider the above a bit artificial. They may be a little, but I believe we have to start somewhere, and since

reducing the quantity of work is unlikely to yield short-term results, we are 'attacking' some of the stresses around work," he said.

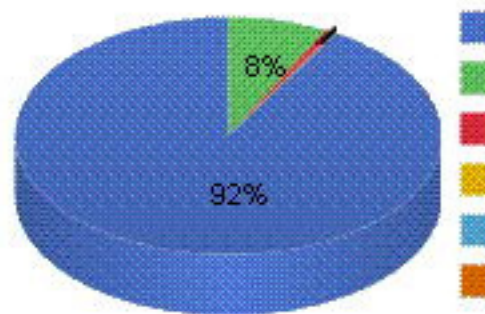
He said he understood there might be times when implementing all his requests won't be possible, but people should do their best to respect the new rules.

A spokeswoman for the department was unable to say what guidelines would be given for handling emergencies.

Submitted by: Greg.

Mac market share keeps moving upwards

Web statistics vendor Net Applications on Friday released its browser and operating system figures for January. The Mac share is again up, inching past 7.5 percent for the month.



According to the site's calculations, the Mac share for January was 7.57 percent and the Windows share was 91.46 percent. The company said that for two days in late December, the Mac share hit 8 percent.

Looking at the year-over-year figures, the Mac share climbed 21.7 percent. The Windows share fell 2 full percentage points from 93.33.

In addition, the year-over-year comparison of the Linux share showed a gain, from 0.42 percent to 0.67 percent.

The iPhone share was 0.13 percent, putting the new mobile platform in the Number 4 spot.

Submitted by: Greg.

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Good chuckle for the morning

A man feared his wife wasn't hearing as well as she used to and he thought she might need a hearing aid. Not quite sure how to approach her, he called the family Doctor to discuss the problem.

The Doctor told him there is a simple informal test the husband could perform to give the Doctor a better idea about her hearing loss.

Here's what you do,' said the Doctor, 'stand about 40 feet away from her and in a normal conversational speaking tone see if she hears you. If not, go to 30 feet, then 20 feet, and so on until you get a response.'

That evening, the wife is in the kitchen cooking dinner, and he was in the den. He says to himself, 'I'm about 40 feet away, let's see what happens.' Then in a normal tone he asks, 'Honey, what's for dinner?'

No response.

So the husband moves closer to the kitchen, about 30 feet from his wife and repeats, 'Honey, what's for dinner?'

Still no response.

Next he moves into the dining room where he is about 20 feet from his wife and asks, 'Honey, what's for dinner?'

Again he gets no response.

So, he walks up to the kitchen door, about 10 feet away. 'Honey, what's for dinner?' Again there is no response.

So he walks right up behind her. 'Honey, what's for dinner?'

(I just love this)

'Ralph, for the FIFTH Fuckin' time, CHICKEN!'

\$1 million adds a letter 's' to a Net address



It may be the most ever paid for a single letter of an Internet address. A British travel company has paid \$1.1 million for the domain name cruises.co.uk, a price that is effectively \$1 million just for the letter

"s" since it already owns the address cruise.co.uk. The sum shatters the previous record for a .co.uk domain of \$300,000, paid in October last year.

Seamus Conlon, whose company bought the address from a German travel company, said it was a necessary move to retain dominance in the rapidly growing market for ocean cruising. "Cruises" is consistently ranked first on Google, with "cruise" just behind," he said. "We wanted the top positions so that when Internet users are searching for deals...we are the first port of call." While the purchase is a record for Britain, it is a long way behind the huge sums paid for more the popular .com addresses. The current most-expensive domain is sex.com, which was bought for \$12 million in 2005. Running close behind is porn.com, snapped up for \$9.5 million last year.

Submitted by: Greg.

New study shows parents clueless, kids just as bad



A new study out of Israel on parent perceptions of their kids' online activities shows a real need for education at both the parental and child levels.

A new Tel Aviv University research study has found that, despite what parents might believe, there is an enormous gap between what they think their children are doing online and what is really happening.

While many parents believe that their children are both safe and honest about what they do online, this study of Jewish and Arab kids

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demonstrated that the youngsters are relatively savvy in terms of covering their tracks.

These children were also engaging in some fairly risky behaviors without their parents' knowledge:

The same children were also asked if they had been exposed to pornography while surfing, or if they had made face-to-face contact with strangers that they had met online. Thirty-six percent from the high school group admitted to meeting with a stranger they had met online. Nearly 40% of these children admitted to speaking with strangers regularly (within the past week).

Fewer than 9 percent of the parents knew that their children had been meeting with strangers, engaging in what could be viewed as very risky behavior.

Ultimately, this study highlights a lot of room for both parent and student education about online media, safety, and technology.

Submitted by: Greg.

Vista SP1 revisited



I posted a survey earlier this week asking people about their Vista migrations. I wanted to take a few moments to comment on the results (with all the usual caveats about unscientific research, selection bias, etc.). It's still worth noting that 50% of the respondents were not planning to migrate to Windows Vista and were, in fact, purchasing downgrade licenses on new hardware to maintain Windows XP. These folks are willing to keep using a deprecated OS requiring significant anti-malware software maintenance. Why? Obviously business applications and specific legacy apps are a huge part of the equation and in many cases, the old saying of "if it ain't broke" certainly applies.

However, for most general computing and even a variety of scientific/educational computing, there are too many good alternatives to bother with a 7-year-old OS. 25% of the respondents

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reported already moving to Vista, while another 17% reported supporting a mixed environment, including Vista as needed. One piece that my survey didn't capture was the subgroup who had never used Windows, so didn't need to consider an alternative; 9%, though, were planning to move to a non-Windows OS for new hardware purchases instead of Vista, even though they had used Windows XP in the past.

As several readers pointed out, most of us have volume XP licenses that can easily be virtualized on either Mac or Linux machines, allowing the maintenance of legacy applications and gradual transitions for employees. While some users and groups have been very satisfied with Windows Vista, that is certainly not a universal phenomenon. So here's another question for those people sticking with Windows XP (even on new hardware for the foreseeable future):

Why are you sticking with XP?

We have Windows-only/legacy applications that we need to support (36%)

It works - If it ain't broke... (27%)

Unimpressed by the alternatives (18%)

User resistance to alternatives (9%)

Another reason (9%)

Total Votes: 384

Submitted by: Greg.

FIVE MINUTE MANAGEMENT COURSE

Lesson 1:

A man is getting into the shower just as his wife is finishing up her shower, when the doorbell rings.

The wife quickly wraps herself in a towel and runs downstairs.

When she opens the door, there stands Bob, the next-door neighbour.

Before she says a word, Bob says, "I'll give you \$800 to drop that towel."

After thinking for a moment, the woman drops her towel and stands naked in front of Bob, after a few seconds, Bob hands her \$800 and leaves.

The woman wraps back up in the towel and goes back upstairs.

When she gets to the bathroom, her husband asks, "Who was that?"

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"It was Bob the next door neighbour," she replies.

"Great," the husband says, "did he say anything about the \$800 he owes me?"

Microsoft should break up now



Microsoft is pursuing Yahoo. Does anyone really know why?

Perhaps it's to "steal the company," as Yahoo's board claims. Of course, a lovely Yahoo dating site would surely work wonders for Microsoft

Exchange and SQL Server. Perhaps the acquisition is about adding coolness to those stodgy, decidedly unsexy, Microsoft products. You know the ones: Office, Windows, the things no one cares about anymore. Well, they generate huge revenue, but WTF. Maybe Microsoft sees Yahoo as its savior in the eternal search war against Google? Doubtful, because Yahoo hasn't whipped Google's ass in search for a long time.

No, this takeover is all about Microsoft and its long-lost mojo. It's quite simple: Microsoft has become tired and is grasping at straws. Bill Gates is gone, the booming stock days are over, and the company is a house divided. It can't decide whether it's a hot Internet services business or an old-line enterprise software company.

My advice to Microsoft: forget Yahoo and break your company up along consumer, enterprise, and Internet lines.

Infrastructure tools, business applications, and operating systems would go into the "I'm boring but rich" division. Internet services would go into the "I love to spend and wanna be cool" group. Games, consumer applications, and hardware (like mice) would be sold everywhere ordinary consumers flock and congregate.

People working in the enterprise business will get corner offices. Those working in the Internet division will get sunglasses, drinks with little umbrellas, and Twitter accounts. The games crowd would get big headphones, so they can be comfy in their own world.

The new enterprise business won't need Yahoo, because they're already selling to the largest companies on the planet; that's why they get the corner offices. Can you think of any reason why the games group would need Yahoo? Neither can I.

All of which brings us to the new consumer Internet group. It suffers at the hands of Google and is boring. Sounds like Yahoo, doesn't it? Well, maybe Yahoo will want to buy them after the post-split dust settles.

Submitted by: Greg.

Some systems showing incredible SP1 performance boost - Day 6



Some systems on which I've installed Windows Vista SP1 are showing significant performance gains.

One system in particular where I'm seeing a significant gain is the AMD Phenom/Spider system which I have in the lab.

For the record, here's the spec of that system:

Phenom 9700 quad-core processor
ATi Radeon 3850 graphics card with 256MB RAM
ASUS M3A32-MVP Deluxe motherboard
2GB (2 x 1GB) Corsair Dominator CM2X1024-8500C5D RAM
Western Digital Raptor 10,000RPM 150GB primary hard drive
Western Digital Caviar 7,200RPM 500GB secondary hard drive

The other day I carried out some file transfer benchmarks on this system with Vista RTM (and all the current patches) installed. After collecting the data installed SP1 and benched it again. When I compared the results I noticed some significant improvements.

For the purposes of these benchmark tests I used two different set of files to transfer:

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A single 644MB file

A folder contains numerous files and folders (3495 files / 30 folders) totaling 5.16GB

I carried out a number of tests which consisted of moving, compressing and extracting these files. All these tasks were performed three times and the results averaged. In all but one of the tests Vista SP1 showed gains over Vista RTM, and in some tests these improvements were so significant that I reloaded the system and carried out both tests again just to check my results (and I concluded with almost identical results).

Here's the data from these tests

Submitted by: Greg.

How to delete your account: Facebook responds (half heartedly)



Following the bad press it received, Facebook has responded by altering the site's help pages to explain how to permanently delete your account. The issue was highlighted earlier in the week in the New

York Times and throughout the blogosphere: While it's simple enough to de-activate your account on the social networking site, doing so won't remove your data. Instead, all of your personal information (photos, blog posts, friend networks etc) remain stored on Facebook's servers by design, in the vain hope that exiting members will one day return.

Buried in the official help pages is now the FAQ: How do I delete my account?

The answer:

If you do not think you will use Facebook again and would like your account deleted, we can take care of this for you. Keep in mind that you will not be able to reactivate your account or retrieve any of the content or information you have added.

If you would like your account deleted, please

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contact us using the form at the bottom of the page and confirm your request in the text box.

A few observations: The information seems purposely buried on the site. It doesn't have a top level category to itself (in the help pages) but is located in 'Account settings'. The is counterintuitive. Deletion of an account isn't a setting but a point of no return (that's the whole idea). Additionally, the form to be used to make the request is poorly signposted (it's the same form used to report a general help question to customer support).

In a response to the Times today, Facebook were keen to point out that the difficulty in deleting an account is a feature not a bug!

"We're always working to improve the user experience," Katie Geminder, director for user experience and design at Facebook, said in a statement sent by e-mail.

"We are measuring the effects of the change we made yesterday, and if we think more needs to be done to improve the user experience for deleting an account, we'll test different implementations and measure them accordingly," she added.

I'd suggest Facebook adds a simple 'Delete my account permanently button' like other sites do. Although if they measure the results they may not like the outcome.

Submitted by: Greg.

Moral of the story:

If you share critical information pertaining to credit and risk with your shareholders in time, you may be in a position to prevent avoidable exposure.

Lesson 2:

A priest offered a Nun a lift.

She got in and crossed her legs, forcing her gown to reveal a leg.

The priest nearly had an accident.

After controlling the car, he stealthily slid his hand up her leg.

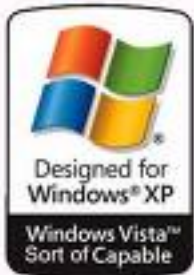
The nun said, "Father, remember Psalm 129?"

The priest removed his hand. But, changing

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gears, he let his hand slide up her leg again. The nun once again said, "Father, remember Psalm 129?" The priest apologized "Sorry sister but the flesh is weak." Arriving at the convent, the nun sighed heavily and went on her way. On his arrival at the church, the priest rushed to look up Psalm 129. It said, "Go forth and seek, further up, you will find glory."

Microsoft employee caught out by Windows Vista Capable logo



Think that Microsoft's "Windows Vista Capable" logo was too confusing? You're not alone. It seems that the program also caught out at least one Microsoft employee.

Note: For background on the logo programs see [this post](#).

Far background to the case see [this post](#). For thoughts I had at the time, see [this post](#).

[Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) reporter Joseph Tartakoff attended a hearing before U.S. District Judge Marsha Pechman on Friday and reports on some of Microsoft's internal e-mails quoted during the hearing. And it makes very interesting reading. In fact, the three excerpts quoted are priceless.

Another employee, Mike Nash, currently a corporate vice president for Windows product management, wrote in an e-mail, "I PERSONALLY got burnt. ... Are we seeing this from a lot of customers? ... I now have a \$2,100 e-mail machine."

That's pretty bad - that's also a lot of money to spend on a machine that was only "Vista Capable". But there's more:

Jim Allchin, then the co-president of Microsoft's Platforms and Services Division, wrote in another e-mail, "We really botched this. ... You guys have to do a better job with our customers."

And this employee doesn't have much faith in the "Windows Vista Capable" logo:

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"Even a piece of junk will qualify" for the "Windows Vista Capable" designation, wrote one employee in an e-mail that Tilden read out loud.

I long held the belief that Vista Basic was Microsoft's way to allow OEMs to continue to sell low-spec systems and still call them Vista machines, and that the "Windows Vista Capable" program would be used to push these machines onto unsuspecting customers. Seems I was right to be concerned.

I feel sorry for people who purchased these machines with visions of Vista (and Aero) in their heads. These people ended up with systems which could barely run Vista.

Submitted by: Greg.

Toshiba delivers its Betamax address



Toshiba officially dropped its plans for HD DVD Tuesday after Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Netflix and a parade of others abandoned the high-definition video format for Sony's Blu-ray.

The statement indicates the obvious—HD DVD was doomed. The writing on the wall has been there for a while with the wheels really beginning to fall off the wagon at CES. Wal-Mart's announcement last week that it was going to support Sony's Blu-ray format solely basically put the final nail in the coffin.

Simply put, Toshiba has been Betamax. A few decades ago there were two video cassette recorder formats—VHS and Betamax. Betamax was championed by Sony, but lost out to the VHS format. Once that format scrum was resolved VCR sales took off.

It's going to be the same story here. Toshiba had no choice but to punt on HD DVD—and it's great news for the consumer that this format war didn't drag on for years and years. See Adrian Kingsley-Hughes' and Robin Harris' takes. Also:

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George Ou cracks open a Toshiba HD DVD player [gallery].

Here's Toshiba's surrender speech, which you could call its Betamax address, BTL style:

TOKYO—Toshiba Corporation today announced that it has undertaken a thorough review of its overall strategy for HD DVD and has decided it will no longer develop, manufacture and market HD DVD players and recorders. This decision has been made following recent major changes in the market. Toshiba will continue, however, to provide full product support and after-sales service for all owners of Toshiba HD DVD products.

Translation: We had no choice. But please don't buy any Toshiba HD DVD products even if they are dirt cheap. It costs us money to support.

HD DVD was developed to offer consumers access at an affordable price to high-quality, high definition content and prepare them for the digital convergence of tomorrow where the fusion of consumer electronics and IT will continue to progress.

"We carefully assessed the long-term impact of continuing the so-called 'next-generation format war' and concluded that a swift decision will best help the market develop," said Atsutoshi Nishida, President and CEO of Toshiba Corporation. "While we are disappointed for the company and more importantly, for the consumer, the real mass market opportunity for high definition content remains untapped and Toshiba is both able and determined to use our talent, technology and intellectual property to make digital convergence a reality."

Translation: It's going to be quite annoying to license Sony's format.

Toshiba will continue to lead innovation, in a wide range of technologies that will drive mass market access to high definition content. These include high capacity NAND flash memory, small form factor hard disk drives, next generation CPUs, visual processing, and wireless and encryption technologies. The company expects to make forthcoming announcements around strategic progress in these convergence technologies.

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Translation: So we goofed on HD DVD. We've got other stuff. By the way we have to say that.

Toshiba will begin to reduce shipments of HD DVD players and recorders to retail channels, aiming for cessation of these businesses by the end of March 2008. Toshiba also plans to end volume production of HD DVD disk drives for such applications as PCs and games in the same timeframe, yet will continue to make efforts to meet customer requirements. The company will continue to assess the position of notebook PCs with integrated HD DVD drives within the overall PC business relative to future market demand.

Translation: We're going to try and make HD lemonade here if possible with notebooks.

This decision will not impact on Toshiba's commitment to standard DVD, and the company will continue to market conventional DVD players and recorders. Toshiba intends to continue to contribute to the development of the DVD industry, as a member of the DVD Forum, an international organization with some 200 member companies, committed to the discussion and defining of optimum optical disc formats for the consumer and the related industries.

Translation: We're still a player.

Toshiba also intends to maintain collaborative relations with the companies who joined with Toshiba in working to build up the HD DVD market, including Universal Studios, Paramount Pictures, and DreamWorks Animation and major Japanese and European content providers on the entertainment side, as well as leaders in the IT industry, including Microsoft, Intel, and HP. Toshiba will study possible collaboration with these companies for future business opportunities, utilizing the many assets generated through the development of HD DVD.

Submitted by: Greg.

Computer tips and tricks

Moral of the story:

If you are not well informed in your job, you might miss a great opportunity.

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Lesson 3:

A sales rep, an administration clerk, and the manager are walking to lunch when they find an antique oil lamp.

They rub it and a Genie comes out.

The Genie says, "I'll give each of you just one wish."

"Me first! Me first!" says the admin clerk. "I want to be in the Bahamas , driving a speedboat, without a care in the world."

Puff! She's gone.

"Me next! Me next!" says the sales rep. "I want to be in Hawaii , relaxing on the beach with my personal masseuse, an endless supply of Pina Coladas and the love of my life."

Puff! He's gone.

"OK, you're up," the Genie says to the manager.

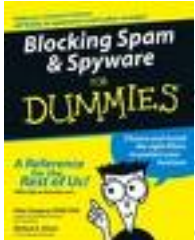
The manager says, "I want those two back in the office after lunch."

Password Checker



[Use this tool to help you gauge the strength of your password.](#)

What Is Spyware, Anyway?



Spyware is software or a software configuration that gathers information about a person or organization without permission or knowledge. Spyware does this often by just peeking, but other times, it spies by changing the

configuration of the victim's computer.

An information collector

Spyware can collect information from a user's computer and periodically transmit it to a specific location — usually a server someplace. The method used to collect information may be a built-in feature of the Web browser, a downloaded ActiveX control, a Web browser

plug-in, or a standalone executable program.

The type of information collected by spyware may include the following:

Tracking Web sites: You may have heard the term adware, which many consider as a subset of spyware. Marketing companies and banner ad providers (many of which are totally legitimate companies) use adware solely to track which Web sites a user visits and whether the user patronizes banner ads. Such information is generally used by marketing companies, which are always trying to separate folks from their money. Some spyware may do more than just track Web site visits, however.

Logging keystrokes: Among the diabolical types of spyware are key loggers, vile beasts that actually record every keystroke on a user's computer and transmit them to a hacker's lair. Users who perform online banking and other electronic commerce on computers with key loggers are bound to have their highly sensitive user IDs, passwords, credit cards, and bank account numbers recorded and sent to unsavory individuals.

An information transgressor

Spyware can alter information on a user's computer, such as the browser's default home page, search page, and the HOSTS file (a text file that contains the IP addresses corresponding to specific host names).

Among the types of spyware that change information on your computer is scumware, which is a term describing browser plug-ins that alter the appearance of Web sites, often substituting the Web site's banner ads with its own ads. A Web site might include a banner ad that takes viewers to the Web site owner's Amazon.com affiliate pages, for instance, but the scumware inserts its own banner ads (and those of its advertisers) in place of those that the Web site intended the viewer to see.

Scumware also creates hyperlinks within the text of Web pages that take users to advertisers' pages. For instance, a user may be viewing a Web site for a local merchant. The scumware inserts hyperlinks on certain keywords on the merchant's page (as viewed by the user whose PC has the scumware installed) that lead the

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viewer away from the merchant's site, perhaps leading to competing Web sites. Usually an ActiveX control, scumware alters the content of a Web page, and it does so by changing (in real time) how the user's browser displays the page

Submitted by: Greg.

Returning Your Computer to Happier Times with System Restore - XP For Dummies



Ever dragged yourself into bed after a particularly disastrous day, wishing you could wake up the next morning and find everything back to normal?

Although things usually remain the same when we wake up, that doesn't have to be the case with Windows XP and its built-in System Restore feature.

System Restore (also built into Windows Me) provides Windows XP with an easy way to bring peace back into a troubled world. Every so often, the System Restore program takes a "snapshot" of Windows XP's key internal settings and saves them by date, known as a "Restore Point." When Windows XP is behaving badly on your system, call up System Restore and tell it to return to a Restore Point when everything was working correctly.

Windows XP quickly loads the settings it used on that Restore Point's date, and when Windows XP restarts, it works just as well as it did on that day in the past.

If you choose a Restore Point that somehow makes things even worse than they were, head back to System Restore and chose Undo My Last Restoration. System Restore promptly discards those settings, restarts, and lets you choose a different Restore Point.

Because everything System Restore does is reversible, there's rarely much to lose in giving it a try. Read on to discover how to use System

Restore to its full potential.

Finding the System Restore program

For some reason, Microsoft hid the darn thing. To locate System Restore, put on your wading boots and click your Start menu. Point to All Programs, then Accessories, then System Tools, and finally, click on System Restore. (You can also find System Restore hidden in the Control Panel under Performance and Maintenance.)

Making your own Restore Points

System Restore normally takes a snapshot of your computer's settings on a daily basis. It usually takes another automatic snapshot when you install a new computer part - just in case the newcomer causes problems. But feel free to create your own Restore Points when everything's running smoothly: Just call up System Restore and choose Create a Restore Point.

Windows will ask you to describe your new Restore Point. The description is just something to help you remember why you made the Restore Point. Type something like, "Created just before installing the Eggplant Toss game." That way, if the Eggplant Toss game messes up your computer, you know which Restore Point will bring the computer back to sanity. (The Restore Points that Windows XP creates automatically have the boring, non-descript name "System Checkpoint.")

Understanding the program

System Restore won't delete any of your letters, e-mails, or other data files, thank goodness. The files you created yesterday will still be there, even if you use a Restore Point from last month.

Because System Restore deals only with Windows XP's settings, it helps only with Windows XP itself. It can't help you locate deleted e-mails or recover deleted files that are no longer in the Recycle Bin.

Using System Restore to "go back in time" won't disinfect your computer of a newly acquired virus, unfortunately.

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If you use a Restore Point from two weeks ago, then any programs installed since then may not work. Programs often alter Windows XP's settings as a way of introducing themselves to your computer. When Windows XP "wakes up" with settings from two weeks ago, it won't remember that those programs have been installed. You'll probably have to reinstall them.

System Restore normally takes a "snapshot" of your computer's most treasured settings every day. However, storing all these settings consumes considerable amounts of space. If the available hard disk space on your C: drive runs lower than 200MB, System Restore stops working until you clear off more space for it to store its settings.

Also, because System Restore has a limited amount of storage space, it deletes its oldest Restore Points to make room for the newest. That means your "window" of available Restore Points may be as little as two weeks into the past.

System Restore tips

Here are some additional tidbits to keep in mind when using System Restore:

When you find yourself humming a happy tune while computing, don't hesitate to create a Restore Point. Just think how happy you'll be down the road if you can return your sick computer to that happy state.

Make it a habit to create your own Restore Points before you do anything that will change your computer's settings: installing a new computer part, like a scanner, or adding new software. The important thing is to create the Restore Point before you make the changes. That gives Windows XP something to return to if the changes mess things up.

When Windows XP is installed, it grabs about 12 percent of your available disk space for System Restore's use. That's usually enough to extend about one month into the past. (Your mileage may vary, depending on the size of your hard disk and how much computing you do.) To change those settings, right-click on My Computer in your Start menu, choose Properties, and click the System Restore tab. The "status" area should say "monitoring," which means that

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System Restore is up and running.

If your anti-virus program just disinfected your computer of a nasty virus, then quickly use System Restore to create a Restore Point called "Disinfected Computer." Then, never use any Restore Points dated earlier than your newly created "Disinfected Computer" Restore Point. Those older Restore Points may return your computer back to a time when it was infected. (Also, if your anti-virus program discovers an infected Restore Point, you'll need to delete that Restore Point manually; the anti-virus program can't do it.).

The moral? If everything's going along smoothly as you're reading this article, perhaps it's time to create a Restore Point

Submitted by: Greg.

Moral of the story:

Always let your boss have the first say.

Lesson 4

An eagle was sitting on a tree resting, doing nothing. A small rabbit saw the eagle and asked him, "Can I also sit like you and do nothing?" The eagle answered: "Sure, why not." So, the rabbit sat on the ground below the eagle and rested. All of a sudden, a fox appeared, jumped on the rabbit and ate it.

Changing or deleting Address Book entries in Outlook Express



On occasion, one of your e-mail buddies switches Internet Service Providers and gives his new Internet address to you. Or, you may lose touch with someone and

decide to remove her name from your Address Book. Either way, the following steps guide you through the process of keeping your Address Book up to date:

1. From Outlook Express, click the Addresses button or choose Tools --> Address Book.

The Address Book dialog box appears (refer to Figure 3).

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2. Click the address you want to change or delete.

3. To delete the address, click the Delete button.

Or, if you prefer, you can right-click the name and then choose Delete from the shortcut menu.

4. To change the address, click the Properties button.

After the Properties dialog box appears, make any necessary changes and then click OK.

5. Click OK when you're finished

Submitted by: Greg.

Moral of the story:

To be sitting and doing nothing, you must be sitting very, very high up.

Lesson 5

A turkey was chatting with a bull.

"I would love to be able to get to the top of that tree" sighed the turkey, "but I haven't got the energy."

"Well, why don't you nibble on some of my droppings?" replied the bull. They're packed with nutrients."

The turkey pecked at a lump of dung, and found it actually gave him enough strength to reach the lowest branch of the tree. The next day, after eating some more dung, he reached the second branch.

Finally after a fourth night, the turkey was proudly perched at the top of the tree.

He was promptly spotted by a farmer, who shot him out of the tree.

Losing Stuff? - Newbie Club



One of the biggest problems facing new computer users is losing stuff. The computer is like a bottomless pit - you can just keep adding info to it, and it

sucks it up like a mega vacuum cleaner. Then you come to realize that you can't find anything!

The whole concept of "My Computer", "My Folders", "My Stuff", and "My Music" is pretty easy to understand, right? Of course it is - when you know how!

Create new folders in the My Documents folder. Name them whatever turns you on. "My Recipes". Or how about "My Downloads"

Want to access something at any time? Just open My Documents, and there are all of your folders, smiling up at you, labeled and ready for service.

If you download music, there's already a folder named "My Music". Create new folders inside, to organize yourself.

The computer is the ultimate organizer. And it's the ultimate servant.

But ... how do you create new folders?

Open My Documents and look at the Menu line. You should see the word "File". Click File, point to New with your cursor, and click Folder. It'll be right at the top.

You'll see a new folder appear, with its name area all blank and blinking, ready for you to start typing. Type a name - spaces are fine, and the name can be real long if you want.

Once done, click off the folder, and the name is set. And you're done. Now you can store your stuff there whenever you're ready. So now, whenever you need to find something, just go to 'My Documents' and plow your way through.

Submitted by: Greg.

How to Take Pictures of Pets and Kids - Chris



It's that time of year again. Families will come together, children will be in wonderful, smiling moods, and you'll have your camera

permanently attached to your hand. Here are some tips sent in by eatsalot, to help you take better pictures of your loved ones.

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Take as many pictures as possible: thanks to digital cameras, you can take hundreds of pictures and then just pluck out the bad ones and delete them. Some cameras also have a rapid take feature, which is very useful.

Don't make them pose: simply give them some toys (or in a pets case - some treats) and start taking pictures. Try to do a sort of candid shot. These always turn out to have better memories, and be more realistic than any posed picture.

Experiment: try different filters and editing programs. You never know how useful software is until you try it. As long as you use a copy of the original to "play" with, you'll never accidentally lose the original photo due to bad changes.

Lighting: make sure that there is enough light, and try to use the flash as little as possible. Reducing the use of flash also means less red-eyed pictures. You wouldn't want anyone thinking your child or pet is the devil themselves. We all know they're little angels.

Sending and Printing: Make sure when you want to print them to get good photo paper and a photo printer. If you are sending them in an email, send them at the highest resolution possible. You don't want to send someone a fuzzy picture. A good thing to keep in mind when emailing large pictures, or several at once, is to zip them into a compressed folder, and attach the entire folder to the email.

Submitted by: Greg.

Moral of the story:

Bull Shit might get you to the top, but it won't keep you there..

Lesson 6

A little bird was flying south for the winter. It was so cold the bird froze and fell to the ground into a large field.

While he was lying there, a cow came by and dropped some dung on him.

As the frozen bird lay there in the pile of cow dung, he began to realize how warm he was.

The dung was actually thawing him out!

He lay there all warm and happy, and soon began to sing for joy.

A passing cat heard the bird singing and came

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to investigate.

Following the sound, the cat discovered the bird under the pile of cow dung, and promptly dug him out and ate him.

Can I Tell XP Not To Highlight New Programs I Install?



QUESTION: I know this is a little thing and doesn't really affect the way the computer works, but it's annoying to me. When you install a new program in XP, it's highlighted in the Start menu. That bugs me. Is there a way to tell XP not to do that or am I stuck

with it? Thanks. - Rita K.

ANSWER:

The idea behind this feature is to make it super easy for you to find your new application in the Start menu after you install it. But if you don't like this behavior, it's easy to change it. Here's how to disable the highlighting:

Right click the Start menu

Select Properties

In the dialog box, click the Start Menu tab

Click the Customize button

In the new dialog box, click the Advanced tab

Click the Highlight Newly Installed Programs check box to remove the checkmark

Click OK twice to get out of the menus

Morals of the story:

(1) Not everyone who shits on you is your enemy.

(2) Not everyone who gets you out of shit is your friend.

(3) And when you're in deep shit, it's best to keep your mouth shut!