Radio Days – 2010-04-10

Tip of the Week – New Internet Connections

A client has had problems with getting a new internet connection to his business. He has been caught between his ISP and Telstra, and each has blamed the other for the lack of connection. The nett effect is that he has been waiting some two weeks to be connected. The main source of frustration is that there has been no communication between ISP and my client: he has spent hours on hold (your call is important to us!) only to be given vague answers to his questions.

The moral of this story is that, while a new broadband internet connection usually happens in less than two weeks, it can take an agonisingly long time. As Murphy's Law states, everything that is important takes longer than expected, especially when it is important.

Downloading Viruses

A client rang me with a problem: his computer would not start properly because he had downloaded a virus with an errant click. This both annoyed his wife and frustrated him. He could not run his anti-virus program because the computer would not get to the stage where it had completed its normal startup process. Thus there was no way to get rid of the virus in the conventional way. It did not have an uninstaller so my client was unable to remove it easily.

The solution in this case was to start the computer is *Safe Mode*. This is a special mode where very few programs start when you turn the computer on. It means that the screen has low resolution (and so looks wrong) but it also means that you do not start a lot of programs (like this virus). To start your computer in Safe Mode just keep pressing the F8 key while the start-up screen is visible and before Windows starts loading. If you wait until Windows has started you will have to restart Windows and press the F8 key earlier in the start-up sequence.

When you get the boot menu just select *Safe Mode*.

I was able to delete the virus because it was a simple one with only one program in one folder. This was in the Program Files folder: the most common place for programs to be installed. Because this virus was created by a novice it was easy to remove: a more experienced writer would have hidden his creation more successfully and made it much more difficult to remove.

Sometimes you get lucky!

Once the virus had been removed it was a simple matter to update his anti-virus program then run a full scan to check for any other infections.

Both he and his wife had seen visions of all their data files disappearing into the wild blue yonder as a result of the virus. His wife had a number of important documents on the computer so we talked about backing-up all of their data files onto an external drive. Because of the small amount of data involved an 8 GB USB memory stick was all that they needed. A quick installation of my favourite backup program (SyncBack) and a copy of their files was safely stored off the hard drive.

A most satisfactory outcome to a potentially devastating careless mouse click! This is the reason that I always recommend to my clients that they do not click on anything if they are not sure what they are doing. This advice is doubled when you see a sign which says ***Click Here!***

Websites

SyncBack   www.2brightsparks.com

Copyright © 2010 Toby Bainbridge