Radio Days – 2010-06-26

Tip of the Week – Yet Another Scam!

I had two calls during the week from clients who had received a phone call which purported to come from Microsoft. In both cases the caller had an accent and claimed to be calling from California about a problem with my client's computer. He got my clients to display some files in a folder, and pointed out that their icon showed a red flag. He did the same thing with files in another folder, and this time the icons had a yellow flag. He stated that this showed that there was a virus on my client's computer.

The next step in the call was to pass my client along to a technical expert. This expert would then have asked my client to download, for a fee, a program which would have "fixed" these problems. The nett result would have been a computer with a real (not pretend) virus and hackers with a real (not pretend) credit card number. Please hang up on this scam!

Driver Problems

Many problems with computers are caused by problems with driver programs. A *driver* is a program which allows Windows to control a piece of hardware. These specialised programs are often the cause of unexplained problems. During this last week I visited two clients whose computers were in dire need of updated drivers, and in both cases the problem drivers were those for the video card. Manufacturers of video cards are under immense pressure to release their new cards as soon as possible so that they can maximise sales.

This pressure leads to the release of cards with drivers which are either incomplete or buggy, or sometimes both. This, in turn, can lean to computers which crash, or just stop responding, at unpredictable moments. This, in turn, had led one of my clients to hit his computer with a piece of two by four! The dents have to be seen to be believed!

There is, as you would expect, a much better solution to this problem: update your drivers. The problem is to know which drivers to update and how to update them. Again, the solution is easy: just download and install *Driver Easy* from the web. The free version does everything that you need to do, and it is almost automatic.

It needs access to the web to check for and download updated drivers, so you may have to configure your firewall. If there is an updated driver version you will be asked if you would like to download and install the update: always answer *Yes*. The program is small but some of the drivers are large: some graphics drivers are almost 100 MB so a fast internet connection will make a big difference.

Your computer will thank you if you keep its drivers up to date!

Websites

Driver Easy   www.drivereasy.com