

Radio Days – 2010-08-21

Tip of the Week – Printer Supplies

Did you know that printer manufacturers make most of their money from selling supplies? This is mostly ink for inkjet printers, which retails for more than \$1,000 per litre, which is much more expensive than petrol and milk. To protect this source of income the printer manufacturers go to great lengths to ensure that you use only their branded inks. The most common form that this protection takes is to place a small chip in the ink cartridges to let the printer know that the cartridge is both genuine and full.

A client recently bought some refilled ink cartridges for her inkjet printer. When she came to print with these new cartridges the printer stubbornly stated that there was no ink available. This, as you can imagine, frustrated her no end.

Please remember that the primary fact about printers is that the cheaper the printer the more expensive the ink. For most people a small monochrome laser printer will be the cheaper option in the long run.

Uninterruptable Power Supplies - I

Many people are finding that their computers are crashing far too often. Sometimes, as discussed last week, it is because the power supply (a small box inside their computer tower) does not have the capacity to provide all the electricity needed by their computer. At other times it is because the power coming into their computer is not up to standard. There can be many reasons for this.

An uninterruptable power supply (UPS) is designed to keep the electric supply coming into a computer at a constant 240 volts. This has two results: the computer hardware will last longer because it is not subjected to the stresses of higher or lower voltages than normal and because you have the chance to save your data before power is lost. A really good UPS will shut your computer down if the power has been lost for more than a set time: I suggest about two minutes. This will cover you for a ten-second power outage and remind you to shut down for a longer outage.

The main threats to electronic components like computers are heat and over-voltage. This applies to all electronic components, which as well as your computer includes other common household items like TVs and stereos. I strongly recommend that you use at least a surge protector for all these items, and a UPS has the advantage that you can continue to watch TV all night even if the power has gone off.

Another reason for using a UPS is that, when power is restored, there is usually a surge as all the connected items in all the houses and businesses start up again. This surge is especially dangerous for electronic items like computers and TVs, and a good UPS will delay your computer's startup by about ten seconds so that the power surge has dissipated. All these measures will help protect your computer and prolong its life.

These measures will also prolong your sanity, as your computer should be more reliable!

Websites

None this week