Radio Days – 2010-10-16

Tip of the Week – Viewing pdf Files

One of the most common ways of distributing information over the internet (and on many newer CDs) uses a file format called **pdf**. This stands for *Portable Document Format* and the format was developed by a company called Adobe. Many computers come with *Adobe Reader* already installed, but there is a much better program available. This better program is called *Foxit Reader* and, like Adobe's reader, it is free. If you have the Adobe pdf reader already installed on your computer I strongly advise you to uninstall it using *Control Panel* then download and install the Foxit reader.

The reasons for this are that the Foxit reader is much faster to open and to display a pdf file and it also has fewer problems than the Adobe reader.

Updating Your Computer

Many people see the standard Windows update icon by the clock on their screen and wonder what it means. This means that Microsoft has found a problem with one of the programs which it supplies and which is installed on your computer. Your computer has checked the Microsoft web site and downloaded the update, so it is sitting on your computer waiting for you to install it.

The next step, which seems to confuse many people, is how to install it. Installation is easy: just click on the yellow shield and follow the prompts. Depending on just which updates are available for installation the process will vary. Often you will need to reboot your computer after the update to complete the installation.

Are there any reasons not to do an update? The answer is **NO!** All updates should be installed as soon as they are downloaded to your computer as part of your computer's maintenance program. There is a good reason for updating your computer: it fixes problems with all the Microsoft programs on your computer and thus keeps it better protected from all the people who would like to get to your banking details.

Failing to install the Windows patches is similar in its effect to failing to install a good anti-virus program and then to keep it updated. Both are needed to keep you as safe as possible in the wilds of the internet. Even if you just do the occasional surfing of some safe sites on the internet and you always delete all the spam emails that arrive in your inbox you can still get a virus. The virus writers are becoming more and more devious in their attempts to part you from your money, and all the old tricks for keeping safe on the internet are no longer enough.

One of the latest tricks is to infect a previously good internet site with rogue information. This can be done is a number of ways, but the most effective is usually to display enticing advertisements which install a virus when you click on the ad. These ads are often displayed using Flash, which is another Adobe product. It is for this reason that I suggest that you make sure that all your programs, not just Windows, are up to date.

The best way to so this is to use a program called *Secunia PSI*. This program will check the programs on your computer and let you know which ones need to be updated. The latest version (version 2) will update many of the programs automatically leaving those which can not be updated for you to do manually. Again, running this program should be part of your computer's maintenance program.

Further Information

Foxit reader	www.foxitsoftware.com/pdf/reader
Secunia PSI	http://secunia.com