

Radio Days – 2010-12-11

Tip of the Week – Things Take Time

I recently met a client who needed to change his way of processing his employees' payroll. The old way involved an Excel spreadsheet which had to be changed for the new tax scales. I persuaded him that QuickBooks provided a much better way of doing payroll as it would be more effective for his complete accounting needs. All was going well until I realised that he expected that, in two hours, I could install QuickBooks, create a new company file and then show him how to enter his weekly payroll. On top of that he expected that these same two hours would enable him to know how to enter all the other transactions which a busy enterprise generated.

As a rough guess it takes about four hours to install QuickBooks or MYOB and then create a new data file for a single business entity (usually an ABN). It will then take the average user a further six to nine months before they are competent with either program. This time is taken learning how to enter transactions, how to fix the inevitable mistakes and how to print and read the reports which the program produces.

As a book I which read many years ago stated: *It takes a certain amount of time to cook an omelette. If you try hurry the process your omelette will either be burnt or it will be raw.*

No Internet Access

There are many reasons for not having internet access. One of the common ones is that you have not paid your bill to either your telephone company or to your Internet Service Provider (ISP). The reason I came across recently was neither of these. Everything that I tried at the client's computer stated that the internet was working correctly except for the small fact that the internet was not working. The phone line worked: I could ring my mobile phone without any problem. I reset the modem by removing the power, waiting for one minute then restored power to the modem. Still nothing

There was a small tell which gave the game away as a problem at the ISP's end: there were only three lights working on my client's modem.

Eventually, in desperation, I rang their technical support department. At first the technician to whom I spoke said that there was nothing wrong at his end. After a few more checks he reported that there was a problem and he would ring back when it was working. He rang back a few minutes later and there were now four lights on the modem! The internet was working again!

There was still one problem: using the phone stopped the internet working. This happened because there was no filter on either the phone line or the internet line. Both lines should have had the appropriate filter. Nowadays you can get a double filter for about \$25 and it made everything work correctly.

The filter is an electronic device which splits the signal down the telephone line so that the phone and the internet modem are isolated from each other. The phone, being an ancient device by modern standards, cannot handle the high frequencies which your broadband internet connection needs to perform properly. If you do not have a filter on every telephone connection to split the signal you can expect to have problems when using both devices together.

The moral of this story is that you should not always believe that you are at fault.

Further Information

None this week