Radio Days – 2010-02-05

Tip of the Week – When Things Go Wrong

This week introduced a problem which I had not seen before. Last week I recommended that you install and use both *Secunia PSI* and *Threatfire*. A client installed both programs and found that her computer slowed down to a snail's pace. This, as you can imagine, was driving her crazy. We tracked the culprits down using *Task Manager* to see which programs were using all the processor's resources. It was obvious which the programs were so I uninstalled them both and the computer ran as well as new.

To activate the Task Manager just right-click on the task bar at the bottom of your screen then select *Start Task Manager*. This will show you what programs are running and how much processor time is spent on each. If you click on a column heading you can sort the column in either direction. There is a lot of information here once you know how to read it.

This only goes to show that computers can be as contrary as the human body: what is meat for one can be poison for another. Just because you hear something on this show does not mean that it is always correct for all computers. You have been warned!

Online Virus Checkers

Sometimes, when you cannot see just what is wrong with your computer, it pays to run an online virus checker. This does not always cure all ills, but it can be a very useful tool when the worst appears to have infected your computer and your current anti-virus program does not find anything.

Because of the Microsoft technologies involved these scanners only work if you are using Microsoft's Internet Explorer. Because so many people do not know that there is any other internet browser you are likely to be using Internet explorer as your main browser. If you click on the blue *E* with a yellow circle around it that will open Internet Explorer. Go to any of the websites listed at the bottom of this page and follow the prompts. Please remember that these scans, like all anti-virus scans, may take a long time.

While these are a useful tool for when things appear to have gone wrong a much better solution is to use a full-time anti-virus program. The program which I currently recommend is Microsoft Security Essentials. The main reasons for this recommendation are:

- It automatically downloads updates and new versions
- It appears to work better than most (if not all) of the other anti-virus programs

Please ensure that you do have an up-to-date anti-virus program running on your computer every time that you go on the internet, if only to protect other people from the viruses that

Further Information

BitDefender	www.bitdefender.com/scanner/online/free.html
Eset	www.eset.com/online-scanner/
Panda	www.bitdefender.com/scanner/online/free.html
Trend Micro	http://housecall.trendmicro.com/au/
Microsoft Security Essentials	www.microsoft.com/Security_Essentials/