

# Radio Days – 2012-03-24

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## *Tip of the Week – Tool Bars in Web Browsers*

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I have, over the years, seen a number of clients whose Internet Explorer window had a large number of toolbars cluttering up the screen. One problem with Internet Explorer is that it can breed toolbars. Many links on the internet will just add a toolbar to Internet Explorer without even asking. Others, which do ask to install their toolbar, rely on the ignorance of the average user to ignore the question and just click on *Next*.

Their Internet Explorer window is proof, if proof is needed, that this approach works.

Sometimes a program asks if it can install another program: two of my favourite programs, CCleaner and Defraggler, install Google's Chrome browser and the Chrome toolbar as an additional download if you are not careful.

### *What Is a Toolbar?*

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A toolbar is a line of input boxes and buttons at or near the top of a web browser's window. They only seem to appear in web browsers, mostly in Internet Explorer, and they take up space on the screen.

Sometimes they are part of a virus or Trojan, and they have been known to hijack search engines and other valuable parts of the internet.

### *What Do They Do?*

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Most toolbars take time to load so they make your web browser slower to load than normal. They can also take up so much screen space that you can have real difficulty in reading more than just the headline on a web page. In short, they are a nuisance.

### *How Do I Remove Them?*

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There are two ways to remove an unwanted toolbar. The first way just removes a toolbar from your screen while still leaving it dormant on your computer while the second way removes the toolbar completely from your computer.

1. To stop displaying a toolbar you need to click on the *View* menu then on *Toolbars*, then click on the toolbar that you want to remove. If you are asked if you want to *Disable* other options make sure that you select them all then click on *Disable*. This will stop this toolbar from loading in future.

Do this procedure for all the other toolbars which you want to remove.

2. To remove a toolbar permanently you will need to use a program removal tool. The tool built into Windows is not nearly as good as my favourite removal program *Revo Uninstaller*. Using Revo Uninstaller ensures that unwanted toolbars stay removed.

## **Potpourri**

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This week's edition is a collection of small pieces which arise at random intervals during the course of a working month.

### *Email addresses*

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This one is a real furphy. So many people ask for an email address which includes their name and address or something derived from these items. A recent example was a client who wanted an email address like [peter.mary@barklyavenue.com](mailto:peter.mary@barklyavenue.com). They had assumed that an email address was just something that you made up within a given format.

This is not possible.

An email address is provided by an organisation which is registered with an organisation that is licensed to register internet domain names. The organisation controlling the registration of

domain names (an example of a domain name is [tobybainbridge.com](http://tobybainbridge.com)) which end in .au (each country has a two-letter suffix like .au or .nz) is [www.auda.org.au](http://www.auda.org.au).

If you want an email address you have three options:

- A free address from an organisation which provides these addresses. Examples are Gmail from Google (*mail.google.com*), Hotmail from Microsoft (*www.hotmail.com*) and Yahoo Mail (*login.yahoo.com* or *au.mail.yahoo.com*). These addresses are accessed using a web browser so are available from any internet device: phone, tablet or computer. This address will be unique so you may not be able to get the name that you want. You can keep this address if you change internet service provider.
- An address given by your internet service provider (ISP). Your ISP ensures that your email address is unique (just as your telephone number is unique) so you can't always get the email address that you want, especially if your name is John Smith. If you change your ISP you will lose your existing email address: this is a major problem for some people. In most cases you will be able to access your emails from any computer in the world which has an internet connection and a browser.
- Another way to have a constant email address is to register a domain name then set it up for email. If you have a domain name then you may well find that you want a website as well: some email addresses will come with your domain name so this will be the best option for some people.

To register a domain name, which will cost you up to \$100 for two years, you need to work through a domain registrar. One of the best is Netregistry: they charge around \$20 per year (with a minimum of two years) for many domain types: *.com.au*, *.net.au*, *.com*, etc. You will then need to find a hosting company: there are many around with prices ranging from around \$5 per month for email only.

There are choices, but you must be prepared to accept that you may not get the email address that you feel is yours by right. All email addresses are unique worldwide (just like telephone numbers) so an earlier bird may just have caught your worm!

### *I Don't Need Protection*

There seem to be quite a few people who think that, because they have nothing valuable on their computer, they have no need of any internet protection. Others say that they do not spend much time on the internet so there is no real chance of getting any sort of infection while online. These comments are like them saying that, because they only drive a very old car occasionally, it is not worth having insurance.

The main reason nowadays for having internet protection is to ensure, as far as possible, that your computer works. I have recently been involved with returning a client's computer after it had become infected. They had just gone online to check something when their computer went crazy. It was obvious that they had been infected with a very effective virus: one which I could not remove.

The only way to remove a virus as well-written as this one is to remove the hard disc from the tower then, in another, clean computer, use a number of anti-virus products to remove all the infections. This cleaning is followed by repairing Windows. The whole process takes about three working days so, by the time you add transport, their computer was out of action for a whole week.

It transpired that they had three anti-virus programs on their computer, and all of them were at least three years out of date! The combination of so many anti-virus programs made for a slow computer: it was very much faster when returned. I gather that their children had, one after another, installed an anti-virus program on their parents' computer to keep it safe. Once this had been done the children then lost interest in the computer and allowed it to become vulnerable to infection from the internet.

All this on a computer which was not considered worth protecting!

Also, because their computer had not been serviced since Adam was a pup, I then had to update all the critical programs which help protect your computer from infection in the first place. All in all, their computer was a model of all the things that you should not do! I hope that they have learned from this experience.

### *Clicking on Links*

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Many people see a link which says *Click Here!* This link could either be in an unexpected email or on a web page. No matter the source, they will still *Click Here*. This is the cause of many a virus and many people do not learn from their mistakes.

Just because somebody has placed a command in an email does not mean that you should follow that command. These links are, more often than not, an invitation to download a virus onto your computer. Once the virus has arrived you have no control over what happens. If this virus is one which can be removed by your anti-virus program then all should be well.

If your anti-virus program cannot remove the problem then you will have to get professional help. This will always take about three working days and will, in most cases, achieve the result that you want. In the worst case you will have to re-install Windows and all your programs and data. This is always an extreme measure and, in all cases that I have known, some data has been lost despite all the best intentions. Of course, if you do not have a backup, you will lose *all* your data!

There is a simple solution to all these woes: do not click on a link unless you know where it will take you!

### **Further Information**

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Revo Uninstaller [www.revouninstaller.com](http://www.revouninstaller.com)

Netregistry [www.netregistry.com.au](http://www.netregistry.com.au)