Radio Days – 2012-12-08

Tip of the Week – New or Recycled?

I have spoken before about the lengths that printer manufacturers will go to stop you using refilled, recycled or remanufactured printer cartridges. This is quite understandable when you realise that they make all their money on the razor blade principle. This method of marketing was developed soon after the invention of the safety razor. In the good old days a man could cut his throat when shaving so Mr Gillette invented the safety razor. This was a much safer way to shave, reducing the need for special styptic pencils which stemmed the flow of blood after any cut to the face or neck.

The invention was to separate the blade and the razor, and to reduce the amount of blade which could cut the skin. To encourage people to buy his razor, Mr Gillette sold the razor at a very low price and made all his money on the blades. This is akin to the modern method of marketing printers for the consumer market: sell the printer cheaply with a small amount of ink or toner then charge like a wounded bull on the inks. The problem with this method is that there is so much profit in the supplies that competitors will inevitably spring up to create inks and toner at a lower cost but still at a considerable profit.

To combat this problem the printer manufacturers placed computer chips in their ink and toner cartridges so that the printer would not print unless the cartridge said that there was enough ink or toner available. This has lead to printer ink being priced at over $1,000 per litre. Would you pay that for petrol or milk?

This was brought to mind because a client had a problem printing, and the problem was caused by a refilled toner cartridge not having its computer chip reset during the refilling process. This caused the printer to frustrate its owner by refusing to print until the page count in the new cartridge had been reset.

All in all, I repeat my recommendation that you only use genuine new cartridges from the maker of your printer. It may cost a bit more but it saves hassles and gives better results.

Backup Your Phone

My new phone gave me some trouble recently so I had to restore it to factory condition. This could easily have resulted in a phone which had none of the details for my contacts, and I did not want to enter all 500 telephone numbers again. During the process of resetting my phone I discovered how to backup most of its contents. Things which I could backup were:

- Contacts
- Texts
- Schedules
- Music
- Photos
- Videos

There were, of course some things which I could not backup:

- Calls made and received
- The layout of the screens

Everything was copied to my PC's hard disc in readiness for a complete reset of my phone and a backup of this data to my external hard disc.

Having done the backup it was then necessary to see if I could read the backup to ensure that it had worked. If I have not explained this before, the only thing worse than not having a backup is having a backup which did not work! I have been in that position with clients before and, believe me, it is no fun explaining to a client that their backup procedure did not backup their data.

The data were all there and waiting for me to pluck up the courage to reset my phone. I have installed Windows on more computers than I can count, but still this new step worried me. I procrastinated for a while then sat down to do the reset. This is a very simple step: just press *Reset*. After a nail-bitingly long wait (in reality only a minute or so) my phone had been reset to its factory condition. Now all I had to do was restore all my data from the backup: this went surprisingly well.

Now the only thing to do was to recreate the layout of the three screens which I have settled on over the last few months of using this new phone. That was very easy because I had, by now, worked out what I wanted on each of the screens so it was just a matter of installing all the icons in the correct place.

Then for the acid test: does it all work?

Yes! Except for one thing: I cannot get onto the internet using the phone network. Getting the internet working on my home Wi-Fi network was easy: just do it. The phone network worked for phone calls both in and out but not for data! So frustrating! After sweating for an evening I went to the local shop and asked for help.

It turned out that I had lost the settings for data from the mobile network. A quick phone call to the network's helpdesk and all was sorted! Now I have a working mobile phone with data, phone calls in and out and the ability to use it as a GPS navigation device as well as an internet connection.

Have you backed-up your phone's data?

Further Information

Nothing this week