

TECH TALK

WITH ALEX MALLIN

HI-TECH COMPUTER REPAIR

Does my computer need regular maintenance? The answer is a definitive YES! If you don't your computer could be bogged down by sludge!

What do I mean by sludge?

Sludge is a term used to define anything that slows down the performance of your computer. *It refers to physical dirt and debris in your computer, Adware, Spyware, Malware, bad or sloppy programming code, and/or registry errors.*

So let me break it down for you. Physical dirt:

Keeping your computer and its parts clean is one sure way of keeping it healthy and running efficiently. Proper maintenance is the key in ensuring your hardware delivers its optimum performance.

This leads us to our first question, how often should I clean my computer? Answer, it depends on several factors such as location (school, office, industry) users and other external elements like pets and smoke contributing to the amount of dirt your computer collects. Its frequency of cleaning will vary from 6 to 12 months (at most) depending on the factors stated above. Note: canned air is not cleaning your computer, and in fact can damage the sensitive electrical components.

A US Health Expert lifts the lid on "bacterial nightmare". A Health Expert in the US has claimed that many toilets are cleaner than computer workstations. *A study by University of Arizona Microbiologist Chuck Gerba demonstrated that the average workstation has 400 times more bacteria than the average toilet.*

According to Gerba, office restrooms had the lowest levels of germs of all of the surfaces he tested, but some of the office workstations he looked at were bacterial nightmares. The telephone is the worst offender with the highest bacteria counts, closely followed by the desktop itself and the computer keyboard. Most workstations are hardly ever cleaned, and Gerba said that they can "sustain millions of bacteria that could potentially cause illness".

A media research company in New York mailed a questionnaire to hundreds of service technicians in the manufacturing and service industries. *The survey of 188 technicians, revealed that 86% of the computers and peripherals that failed could have been prevented by regular preventive maintenance and cleaning of the internal components is one of the most important parts of preventative maintenance.*

ADWARE & SPYWARE

What is Adware?

Adware is any software application in which advertising banners are displayed while the program is running. The authors of these applications include additional code that delivers the ads, which can be viewed through pop-up windows or through a bar that appears on a computer screen.

Adware has been criticized for occasionally including code that tracks a user's personal information and passes it on to third parties, without the user's authorization or knowledge. This practice has been dubbed Spyware and has prompted an outcry from computer security and privacy advocates, including the Electronic Privacy Information Center.

What is Spyware?

Spyware is any technology that aids in gathering information about a person or organization without their knowledge. On the Internet (where it is sometimes called a *spybot* or *tracking software*), Spyware is programming that is put in someone's computer to secretly gather information about the user and relay it to advertisers or other interested parties. Spyware can get in a computer as a software virus or as the result of installing a new program.

Spyware is often installed without the user's consent, as a "drive-by" download, or as the result of clicking some option in a deceptive pop-up window.

The cookie is a well-known mechanism for storing information about an Internet user on their own computer. If a Website stores information about you in a cookie that you don't know about, the cookie can be considered a form of Spyware.

Spyware is part of an overall public concern about privacy on the Internet. When you consider the amount of valuable personal information stored on your PC (including credit card and banking details, personal e-mails and documents, as well as shopping and browsing habits) the risk of unknown software intruders becomes obvious. Known consequences of Spyware and Adware include identity theft, computer problems, slow Internet access, changed homepage and favorites, and excessive pop-up advertisements.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Spyware and Adware, also called "Malware", are files made by publishers that allow them to snoop on your browsing activity, see what you purchase, and send you "pop-up" ads. They can slow down your PC, cause it to crash, record your credit card numbers, user names, passwords, and other private information. And to make matters worse Anti-virus software and firewalls do not fully protect your system against the majority of Spyware and other privacy threats.

WINDOWS REGISTRY

What Is a Registry?

Registries are only found in Windows operating systems, and are simply a list of all of the running and available programs on your computer. Each time that Windows loads, all of the items in the registry become working parts of the computer.

What does that mean? Basically it means the Windows Registry is a hierarchical database that stores all the configuration settings and options on Microsoft Windows operating systems. Every time you use your computer, change settings, add or remove programs (just about anything you do!) adds to, changes, or deletes some part of the Windows Registry.

How does this affect my computer performance?

Common issues are:

Slow boot-up. Windows has a history of being an operating system that takes a lot of time to boot up. Even with the best hardware configuration, you can expect that the speed of your computer will decrease when your computer accumulates registry errors.

Longer response. Your computer system will take more time to respond to even the simplest command if your registry already has a lot of errors.

System crashes. Without regular tune-ups, it is very possible that your computer may crash because of errors, file overload, hard drive defragmentation, or missing Registry links.

The Blue Screen of Death or BSOD. Most computer users have used the term the “blue screen of death” to refer to the blue screen that appears when your operating system suddenly contains nothing but codes and commands. You will lose all the files you have saved on your computer and it is almost impossible to retrieve everything you’ve lost.

Unresponsive systems. Over time, your computer will inevitably become unresponsive to your commands. Even if you manage to open the program you require, it would end up closing unexpectedly most of the time.

Poor internet browsing capabilities. Your browser will not get all the response it needs from your system, the result is a very slow browsing capability that will leave you frustrated and irritable.

Slower software start. Even the software you commonly use such as Microsoft Office, e-mail, and other programs will take a long time to start if your computer system is full of registry errors.

To schedule your computer maintenance, tune-up and optimization call

Hi-Tech Computer Repair at

(707) 888-7676



OUR 100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

If there is nothing wrong with your computer or we can not improve the performance of your computer you won't pay a dime!

The service call will be absolutely FREE!