Reliant PC Consulting

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A recent spam email looked exactly like it was from the Better Business Bureau.

- Using an email alias or throw away email address when using the Internet can cut down on spam.
- If you ever post your email online in a forum do so like this: ericedwards [at] rogers.com

National Do Not Call List

A reminder that the **National Do Not Call List** is available for you to register your phone number(s). After an initial flurry of activity where the main phone number and web site were down you can no access this service. It is easy to do. See the Reliant PC Consulting Blog for step-by-step instructions on how to register.

You can add a land line, wireless, and fax number to the DNCL.

Go to: http://reliantpcconsulting.wordpress.com and look for the instructions under the title National Do Not Call List Instructions.

Spam!

Spam is the Internet equivalent to graffiti and is a pernicious pest for people, their computer, and resources. Recently a Better Business Bureau spam email was generated that sent out tens of thousands of emails that looked legitimate. Chances you are getting spam and there are several things you can do about it.

First, never reply to spam. **EVER**. Even in a fit of pique the moment you respond to a spam email your email address is verified and you will get more spam.

Second, spammers are smart. Some spam emails look entirely legitimate but unless it is addressed to you specifically do not open or respond. Often the To address is a variation of your email address or not even it at all. Example of real address: closet@rapid1.com. Spam to address: gail_psm@rapid1.com.

Third, keep your O/S and virus software up-to-date in case the spam is inadvertently opened and you are hacked.

Fourth, consider upgrading your free antivirus software or buying a package that has a spam filter. These are effective tools in identifying, blacklisting and managing spam.

Fifth, if you are using Windows Live, Outlook, Thunderbird or another email program keep your contact list up-to-date. Having your contacts you send and receive email to and from helps these programs to identify and deal with spam.

Though not exhaustive these 5 actions can help a user in dealing with spam.

Look for…

Reliant PC Consultant's Computer Maintenance checklist coming to you in PDF format soon!!!

A Simple Upgrade: the unsung mouse

Want to minimize mouse movement and reduce fatigue?

Buy mouse that uses a laser to track motion and have a forward and back button on the mouse. These buttons negate the need to slide your mouse up to the back button on your web browser window.

Computer Maintenance

What is it?

The systematic and scheduled tasks a user or a technician does to prevent problems and keep the computer running effectively.

Why?

More like why not! There are some basic weekly, monthly and annual items that can be done to keep a computer running effectively. We often do not realize until we have a problem how important this appliance is and the information on it.

Do you see the positive effects of computer maintenance?

Yes and No!

Yes: The clients who run one program regularly – CCleaner – do not experience as many issues as they did before they started to use it.

No: Part of the reason my business continues to grow. Applying the simple tasks of computer maintenance regularly would prevent the service call in the first place.

Yes: Regular maintenance prevents a computer from running slower and if it is well maintained it generally makes trouble shooting problems that come up from time-to-time easier.

No: Doing these tasks regularly can make a computer user complacent because the costs of doing them are soft. They do not pay in hard cash but in time and effort and as time progresses the value of doing maintenance can appear to diminish.

Is Computer Maintenance a Panacea?

No…things still happen. I have 3 computer and 3 users at home and do maintenance at least weekly on all my computers but issues such as new software install problems do come up.

Cell Phone as PDA

Did you know that your cell phone can be a Personal Data Assistant?

Today many cell phones can, with optional software and an USB cable, be setup to communicate with Outlook (not Outlook Express) to download your contacts, notes and schedule? Even keep copies of your email in it. If you do not use Outlook some cell phone manufacturers include contact management software to allow you to organize your contacts, date book and tasks.

For example the Sony EricsonW580i comes with the cable and software to connect to Outlook. It retails for around $40.00.

Noises a Computer Makes

A computer will make various noises…

Some of them are good.

You should hear some fan noise and some hard drives make some noise during operation. Your CD/DVD drive should make a noise when it first spins up when you put media in it. But other than that a computer should be virtually silent.

Some older computers do exhibit a noticeable fan noise.

Some noises are bad. In order of worry factor…

- Hard drive clicking constantly, low frequency humming, whining, or thumping.
- Fans clicking or whining.
- Unusual rattles from CD/DVD drives.

And the lack of noise can be even more problematic…

- No fan noise from power supply, case, CPU or GPU.

Be aware of any unusual changes in sound and note and report them. It may be time to do something about it.

Along with CCleaner I recommend Spybot and Malwarebytes as preventive maintenance tools.

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