

May 2008

Intelligent Technical Solutions

Innovations

Memorial Day May 26, 2008

While the birthplace of Memorial Day is still up for debate, this national day of remembrance was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan. By 1890, Memorial Day had caught on like a wild fire in the northern states.

This great holiday began as a day to honor soldiers who passed in the Civil War. Today, we celebrate the lives of war heroes from across history on this holiday.

The White House even observes and promotes a "National Moment of Remembrance" at 3:00pm every Memorial Day.



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INTELLIGENT TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

Fixes and compatibility changes for Vista

Microsoft continuously strives to improve their operating systems with ongoing updates. The Windows Vista Service Pack 1 is no exception.

Since the original release of Windows Vista back in January of 2007, many companies have held off on purchasing the new operating system until after the first Service Pack released. This became a ritual of sorts for organizations since the first updates generally include bug fixes and compatibility enhancements that prevent costly downtime when implementing a new system.

Windows Vista SP1 is an update for Vista that includes all of the previously released updates for Vista as well as a few enhancements. While many updates are available to the public through the Microsoft Download Center and Windows Update system, some were only available to specific customers or partners.

What's so special about SP1 If you have used Vista at all you have inevitably encountered some problematic issues. The first Service Pack for Vista is focused on reliability and compatibility improvements for all users. It addresses many of the common causes for crashes and hangs in Vista related to Windows Calendar, Media Player and a number of drivers. SP1



also includes performance improvements to speed up the process of copying files or viewing large images as well as security updates.

Soon, retailers will begin selling PCs with Windows Vista and SP1 pre-installed. However, you don't have to wait if you are ready to buy. The Vista Service Pack pre-installed or downloaded are truly the same version.

Microsoft's take on the Service Pack The easiest and most convenient way to update your Windows Vista-based PC is to keep Automatic Updates turned on. Microsoft encourages this method to ensure users receive a complete set of updates.

Get your hands on Vista SP1 Microsoft strongly recommends using Windows Update to download and install the Windows Vista SP1 on single PCs. You can find the Windows Update website at update.microsoft.com and check your computer to see if you need updates for your current version of Windows, programs, hardware or even other devices.

If you have Automatic Updates turned on, you should have automatically received Service Pack 1 in mid

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6 tips to avoid viruses, worms and spyware

Have you ever had a virus? Cough, headache, sneezing and chills—Yuk! Doctor's push preventative measures each year as the cold and flu season approaches but still millions are infected.

Your computer is continually at risk too — prevent a serious infection with these great tips for avoiding nasty encounters with viruses, worms and spyware.

1. Virus protection software is a must on all computers to prevent data disasters. With that said, all virus software is not created equal. We strongly recommend using a centrally managed anti-virus system for businesses with three or more PC's. This will give your organization a greater level of protection.

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Is It Legal For Employers To Monitor Your Computer?

Courts have ruled that an employer's monitoring of its employees' e-mails and other computer related activities during work hours and/or on company-owned equipment, Internet, and e-mail accounts is not illegal.



Companies typically monitor employees' online usage for the following reasons:

1. To avoid claims based on sexual, racial, ethnic, and other forms of harassment.
2. To protect against an employee sending or posting confidential information.
3. To reduce exposure to intellectual property infringement claims.
4. To decrease the likelihood that an embarrassing message attributed to the employer will be sent.
5. To guard against computer viruses.
6. To improve productivity.

It is recommended that employers create an AUP (acceptable use policy) that outlines what is and isn't acceptable use of electronic media and communications.

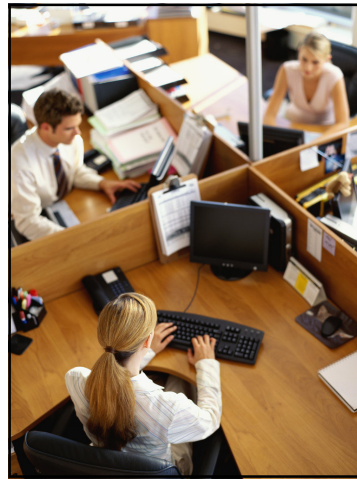
Fixes and compatibility changes...

(Continued from page 1)

April. Automatic Updates can be a great way to keep on top of security-related updates too.

For example, if a widespread virus or worm that affects Windows-based computer systems came about Microsoft would release a corresponding update as soon as possible.

With Automatic Updates, your computer would receive this security update immediately helping you stave off attacks saving you a tremendous amount of time and money.



you need to uninstall it before you download the new version of Vista SP1. Use the Control Panel to view the Programs and Features then select to View Installed Updates and trash the Service Pack for Windows. Did you get all that?

Need a helping hand?

If you don't have time to jump through the hoops to properly install and update your system or it is just plain confusing — give us a call today! We are here to help.

Intelligent Technical Solutions
(888) 969-3636

Tips for installing Vista SP1 Even if you have Automatic Updates turned on Microsoft recommends a visit to the Windows Update center to install all the optional drivers before installing SP1 via the standalone installer in the Microsoft Download Center. Also, if you have a previous version of Windows Service Pack 1 beta installed,

Have you put off changing over to Vista until the Service Pack release? Are you ready to explore your options now?

Give us a call today and our trained staff will help you develop a migration plan.

6 tips to avoid viruses...

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2. Risky websites can lead to infection

Always stay away from risky Internet websites, like those enticing gambling sites. They may look fancy but give you unwanted programs and software that could take charge of your computer.

3. "No Clickie Clickie" as our Lead Technician always says. If a popup appears on your screen do not click the red "X" to close it. Viruses and spyware may be attached to the "X". Right click the task bar title box for that page and choose close.

4. Always scan programs from the Internet before opening them

up to install on your computer. Also, if you need to swap data between computers, make sure to scan the storage device(s) for viruses too.

5. Never use pirated software. It is not only illegal but a fabulous way to invite computer viruses. While the kid down the block is handy with

his CD burner, he and you can never really be sure if the programs are safe. Viruses are easily spread with out any knowledge of the damages possible.

6. Back up your files regularly

Few companies truly do a good job of backing up the data on their server and computers. Take a look at our Online Automatic Data Backup. It's safe, secure and can save you a lot of time and money.

We cannot guarantee you will never fall victim to a virus, computer worm or Trojan even if you follow each of these steps religiously. However, we can say you will greatly reduce the chance of being an unsuspecting recipient of these unwanted programs and software as well as equip yourself with the tools to recover your data fast.

Protect your business and home computers. The best time to prevent disasters is before they happen and we would be glad to help.



I Have A Dirty Secret...

I have a dirty secret to confess...

I don't clean my computer as often as I should. Yes, I've shaken the crumbs out of the keyboard from time to time just like everyone else, but that could hardly constitute as a "cleaning."

With Spring in the air, I thought this would be a good opportunity to remind everyone (myself included) to clean out those dirty PCs. After all, you should do this every 3 to 4 months. And, it's not just for sanitation purposes...

The electromagnetic field put off by your computer attracts dirt. Just take a look at the back of your PC near the fan vent. Pretty gross, huh?

It's Not Just Dirty...It's Dangerous!

The dust clogging those vents will cause your CPU to heat up—and heat is the biggest cause of component failure in computers. Yep, that dirt and dust can end up shutting down your PC and costing you real money!

Cleaning your PC can also prevent the spread of germs. Keyboards are breeding grounds for all kinds of infectious and nasty critters and multiple studies have proven there are more germs on the average keyboard than the average toilet!

Now that I've completely put you off your lunch, let me give you a general overview of how to clean your computer...

A Warning Before You Start Scrubbing

Never spray or squirt any type of liquid onto ANY part of your computer. If a spray is needed, spray the liquid onto a cloth and then use that cloth to rub down the component. You NEVER want to get any of the components inside the computer wet and you don't want to spray cleaner directly onto a computer screen!

Also, when vacuuming the dust INSIDE your computer, make sure you use one that was designed specifically for the job and not the one in your closet. Standard vacuums create static electricity that can damage the internal components of your computer. Instead, use a portable battery powered vacuum designed to do this job.

You will also need:

1. A screwdriver to open the computer case; just be very careful not to unplug, unscrew, or knock anything out of place!
2. A can of compressed air.
3. A computer-approved cleaning liquid such as rubbing alcohol or mild cleaning agent like dish liquid diluted down.

4. Cotton swabs (Q-tips).
5. A lint-free cotton cloth.

Tip: Wiping down the outside of your computer tower with a solution of one half vinegar and one half water will minimize static.

Before you begin, turn off your computer.

I like to start by sucking out all the dirt, hair, and dust with a vacuum. Do an extra good job around any ventilation locations as they will help to keep a steady airflow thereby keeping your internal components cooler.

When cleaning the fan, I suggest you hold the fan or place something in between the fan blades to prevent them from spinning. Avoid spraying compressed air into a fan or cleaning it with your vacuum since it may cause damage to some models.

Compressed air is great for getting all the crumbs, dust, and dirt out of your keyboard, but be sure to also wipe down the keys and surface of the keyboard (that nasty cold or flu might still be hiding out on it)!

When cleaning the monitor, use a lint-free cloth (like the one you use to clean your eyeglasses). Paper towels, dryer sheets, and other cloths may scratch the monitor. Also, never use Windex or a commercial cleaning product, and never spray anything directly onto the screen. Instead, lightly spray a mixture of rubbing alcohol and water onto your cloth and wipe it down.

Want Us To Clean Your Computer For FREE?

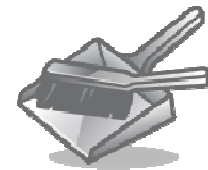
Want us to do the dirty work? Then call us for any job during the month of May and we will clean up to 5 PCs and 1 server in your office...FREE!

No more grime, germs, or dust bunnies—we'll get rid of them all as part of our Spring-cleaning special!

Just call the office for any repair, installation, upgrade, or project, and we'll make sure your computers shine!

Call us: 888-969-3636

E-mail us: help@itsasap.com





INTELLIGENT TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

May 2008

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Full-time IT, at part-time prices! — UNLIMITED support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for just like payroll!

Inquiring Minds...

New cameras wait for a smile, won't shoot if you blink

At the annual Photo Marketing Association trade show in Las Vegas, makers offered cameras with smart features that border on spooky but with prices that won't scare you off.

Nikon's new Coolpix S550 is priced at \$230. It has a new anti-blink feature that lets you shoot up to eight people in a group. If one of them blinks, a message notifies the photographer. Canon's PowerShot SD1100 IS has 8 megapixels, image stabilization and a zoom for \$250.

Industry researchers say manufacturers are focused on pushing down prices on sophisticated cameras. They are packing in more megapixels and adding anti-blink technology in point-and-shoot cameras.

Many point-and-shoots now offer face-detection technology. Last year, Sony included a feature that stops the shot if the subject isn't smiling.

Sony's \$400 Cyber-shot DSC-T300 has advanced face detection that detects child and adult faces and sets exposures. It has an eerie, but effective, editing tool that will literally put a smile on the face of a frowning subject.

Panasonic's new Lumix DMC TZ5 (\$350) and TZ4 (\$300) have intelligent exposure modes that compensate for pictures that are too light or too dark.

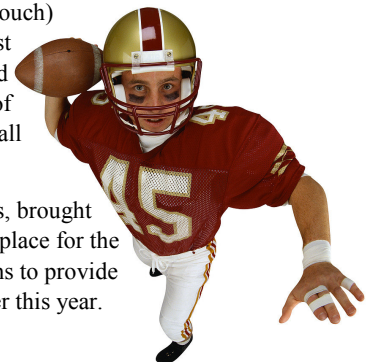
Most cameras sold today are in the point-and-shoot category, but single-lens reflex models are also making news. Canon's Digital Rebel XSi SLR has 12 megapixels, precise auto-focusing, a built-in dust sensor and a lower price of \$800. Nikon's new D60 10 megapixel SLR is also priced at \$800.

Gamers can feel an impact

Dedicated gamers want more participation in battlefield and sports games. Now they have it.

A technology known as haptics (virtual touch) makes it possible. The player wears a vest or helmet studded with tiny computerized air pistons. Gamers can feel the thwack of a tackle or impact when catching a football without actually suffering any real pain.

TN Games, a division of TouchNetworks, brought one of the first haptic vests to the marketplace for the 2007 holiday season. It sold out. TN plans to provide haptic helmets, sleeves and pant legs later this year.



Need a Translator?

Do you ever feel like the error messages on your computer are simply no help at all? Give us a call...we can help! Our technicians can answer your questions and help you prevent further damage to your systems.

Our staff is available to translate your computer garble into a sensible plan of action. We will walk you through a full system evaluation and repair options. Work with you to order the products you need and set up an appointment for services.



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