

Radio Days – 2010-11-27

Tip of the Week – Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

A woman recently purchased a mobile phone. Nothing remarkable in that, you might think, but when she took it home her teenage mutant ninja turtle (aka her teenage daughter) took it and downloaded and installed some programs from the Apple iPhone store. Again, nothing remarkable in that, you might think, but her new phone turned into a brick and refused to work. The reason? Her phone was an Android phone (an HTC Desire) and would not run iPhone apps, just as Windows computers do not run Apple Mac programs.

Should she have been able to download these iPhone programs for an Android phone? It would have been more helpful if the phone had blocked her access, or at least stopped her from installing these programs.

Unfortunately it is impossible to make anything fool-proof because fools are so persistently ingenious. *Caveat emptor!*

Looking After Your Hard Disc

There is a growing number of my clients who are finding that their computer is slowing down and the culprit is turning out to be an abused hard disc. A computer's hard disc is one of the most fragile parts of a computer (after the flat screen) and it does not take kindly to being abused. For laptop computers this abuse can be a simple drop onto a car seat or a bed, and for a desktop a slight bump when the computer is running is enough to send the hard disc into a spasm.

The symptoms of such a spasm are that the computer slows down because the file system has become corrupted. Sometimes this can be solved by running a program called **chkdsk**: this is a part of Windows and will repair many errors in the file system. It will not, however, fix a problem caused by damage to the hard disc's recording surface.

Please remember that a hard disc spins at over 5,000 rpm and has a head which flies very close to the platter surface. This has been likened to a Boeing 747 flying at 600 kph just 10 cm above the ground. As you can imagine, the slightest small twig will cause the plane to crash.

The same thing happens to your hard disc if you drop or bump your computer, especially if you are using your computer at the time. Please treat your computer with the respect that it needs, even if not the respect that you think that it deserves!

chkdsk is a command-line program. To run it follow these steps:

1. Click *Start » Run* (Windows XP) or type *run* into the Windows Vista / 7 start box
2. Type *cmd* then press *Enter*
3. When the black window appears type *chkdsk c: /f* and press *Enter*
4. When asked if you would like to run a repair at your next reboot type *y*
5. Type *exit* and press *Enter*
6. Now restart your computer.

At this restart you will see an unfamiliar window appear: this is normal so do not worry. Your computer will run the full *chkdsk* command: this may take up to about 20 minutes so just wait until it has completed, once *chkdsk* has finished your computer will restart normally. You may have to run this up to three times to completely fix all errors: if you need more than three runs you will need to take your computer to hospital.

Further Information

None this week