

Radio Days – 2009-10-03

Tip of the Week – Keep It Clean

The federal government and *ISPs* (Internet Service Providers) are getting close to agreeing on a protocol which means that an ISP can deny internet access to any of its subscribers if the subscriber's computer is showing signs of behaving like a *bot*. A bot is a computer which is part of a *botnet*: a group of computers *owned* by a *bot master*. You may remember that I mentioned a gambling site in central Australia which refused to pay a ransom: they were hit with a *DDOS*: a Distributed Denial of Service attack. This attack brought down all internet traffic in Alice Springs, most internet traffic in Adelaide and a large part of Sydney's internet traffic. Telstra then stopped all traffic to the betting site to relieve the congestion and allow other internet users to continue with their accustomed access.

This was all brought about because too many people allowed their computers to be owned by a bot master, and the proposed new legislation will allow ISPs to stop all traffic to an owned computer until it has been cleaned. The reasoning is that the owner of a computer which cannot access the internet will ring the ISP's support line and be told to clean their computer. For most people this will involve professional help. The will then be allowed to rejoin the internet when they can prove to their ISP that their computer has been cleaned.

Finding Lost Files

Many of my clients have asked me to help them find lost files. Often they do not know much about the file (like its name or contents), but they do know (or are convinced) that it is there. I, then, have to make the file appear as if by magic. The first step is to use the search tool which comes with Windows to search for file names. This is a very basic search and will only find file names. It has no means of finding content within files so is, at best, a very crude search method.

There are other desktop searching programs: my favourite is Copernic Desktop Search. This is a free program to download and it will then search your computer while your computer is not working. This can take a day or two initially, but the result is that your data is then available very quickly. It will search word-processing documents and emails, which are the main document types on a normal computer. I suggest that you download and install this program so that that it is there when you need it.

Google Desktop is another program which can search the content of files. I do not like it as much as I like Copernic Desktop Search because it will only show a few files at a time (Google is, after all, a search engine) and I much prefer the way that Copernic Desktop Search displays its results.

Another program which helps you search is ZTreeWin. Those who remember XTree and XTree Gold will feel at home with ZTreeWin: its interface is familiar. For new users it may be a bit of a shock because it probably will not look like any program you have ever seen. It is, however, very powerful and worth getting to know. You can use it both to find files and to search for text within them. It is much faster than Windows' own search, and far more useful.

Websites

Copernic Desktop Search	www.copernic.com
Google Desktop	desktop.google.com
ZTreeWin	www.ztree.com