

Radio Days – 2009-10-31

Tip of the Week – Checking your Anti-Virus

One of my clients saw a warning that there was a problem with his computer's security. He was not sure just what it meant so he ignored it because I had assured him that all would be well. Unfortunately I had made a mistake: his AVG was not being updated. By the time I saw his computer his AVG was some three months out of date. I discovered that, because he had dial-up internet access, AVG was not updating. I tried an update at his home with no real success so took his computer home.

Downloading the updates over a broadband connection took about an hour. He also needed to update his Internet Explorer from version 6 (which came with Windows XP) to version 8 (the latest version). This was too big for a dial-up connection, as was the update to Windows XP SP3. All in all, his computer is now in excellent shape, but it took a lot of updating. It appears that computers with dial-up internet access may be more vulnerable to attack than I had realised. Please check your computer to see if its software is up-to-date.

Buying a New Computer

There are three things to consider when buying a new computer:

- Work out what your needs are
- Work out what your budget is
- Find out whether you need your computer to be portable or stationary

Just about all computers today (netbook, notebook or desktop) will do the standard home duties of surfing the internet, sending and receiving emails and some word processing. Add bookkeeping for small businesses, as this task is often needed, and most computers today will run both QuickBooks and MYOB. They will also store and print photos, and store and play music. The main question to ask when you are buying the computer is: *How long does it take to start up?* Many computers look fine when sitting in the shop with a screen-saver on display, but ask the sales person to start the computer from cold. If you can live with the time that this takes then ask them to start a big program like Microsoft Word. If you can also live with the time that this takes then ask them about the computer's price. If you can live with the speed, the cost and the price then you have found a good candidate.

Run through this process with a few computers in each of a few retailers and pick the one which works best for you. Far too many people, unfortunately, just go to a shop and pick the first one they see (usually at the lowest price), then have to live with a dog of a computer for the next few years.

***The pain of poor performance lingers long after
the pleasure of low price has been forgotten***

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<i>Netbook</i>	Cheap, small, often good battery	Slow
<i>Notebook</i>	Faster	Larger, heavier, more expensive
<i>Desktop</i>	More expandable	Keep in one place

Websites

None this week