

Radio Days – 2010-09-25

Tip of the Week – Free Space

Windows needs quite a lot of free space on each hard disc to work effectively. If your hard disc is crammed with data Windows feels as though it is wearing a pair of shoes which are far too tight. One client had a hard disc with less than 2% free space: Windows needs at least 15% to be able to work at a reasonable speed. If the amount of free space is too low then you need to remove some files to make space available. This may mean that you need to buy a new disc to increase the disc space available.

There are a number of ways to reduce the space taken up by files:

- Remove duplicate files
- Remove temporary files
- Reduce the amount of cache used by your web browser
- Compress files which are not currently used
- Merge disc partitions if you have two partitions and one is unused

Mail Merge

One of my most frustrating experiences was watching a friend waste a lot of time because she refused to learn a new skill. She had to create a large number of letters inviting important people to a work function. Each person needed a personal letter, so she typed the address and salutation for each person then waited until each letter had printed before starting the next.

This was a process which she repeated each month, and she had three lists of invitees. I tried to explain to her that she could save time by learning how to use mail merge, but her stress levels were far too high for that to sink in. Indeed, not only would she have saved time on this occasion but she would have been able to do an hour's work in five minutes each following month!

These are the sort of results which you, too, can achieve if you will take the time to improve your skills. There are all sorts of ways in which you could improve your skills:

- Learn how to use mail merge to print a personal copy of letters, envelopes or labels
- Learn how to use text completion. This helps by allowing you to enter a short label which Word expands: useful for people who regularly type the same text
- Learn how to use styles to keep your documents looking professional
- Learn how to set up a standard document once, rather than changing the font, page size and margins for each new document
- Learn how to create a new template, with headers and footers, for common tasks like letters or faxes
- Learn how to create a table of contents or index automatically
- Find what skills other people are using to make their life easier

Further Information

None this week.