

Radio Days – 2011-03-19

Tip of the Week – Keeping Up-To-Date

This article is the result of a clash that I had with a client's computer. She rang to ask me to copy her QuickBooks to her new computer. This sounded as easy as many tasks I have been asked to do, but it was not.

To start with her computer was running Windows 98. This, in itself, raises some interesting problems. Many current programs will not run on Win 98, USB memory sticks will not work on Win 98 unless they have a driver (and no current sticks come with Win 98 drivers) and I could not find on the internet a Win 98 program to burn CDs. This makes copying programs and data from a Win 98 computer very difficult. It boils down to removing the hard disc from the computer, installing it into another computer then copying what you need before replacing the hard disc in the Win 98 computer.

Please do not do this to your favourite computer consultant: it will drive him mad as surely as your computer drives *you* mad!

Choosing an Anti-Virus Program

There is one choice which all good online computer users need to make and that is *Which anti-virus program?* Over time I have recommended a number of free anti-virus programs, and my current recommendation is *Microsoft Security Essentials*. This program has all the features which I look for in an anti-virus program both for myself and for my clients:

- It does not use too many system resources
- It downloads daily updates easily and quickly
- It downloads version updates easily and quickly
- It has thorough checking for viruses
- It only checks for viruses: it doesn't attempt to remove files from your hard disc, etc

Over the years the program which I have recommended has changed, and I expect that this will continue to happen. A good program comes along then is made expensive, adds too many Swiss Army Knife tools so takes up too many resources or takes too long to check for new viruses. My current favourite is Microsoft Security Essentials because it ticks all my boxes.

This was brought home to me recently when I visited a new client. Her computer, among other things, was very slow and drove both her and me slowly mad. I checked, and found that she had recently bought and installed a commercial anti-virus program. I removed this program and installed MSE and we were both surprised to see just how much faster her computer had become. Just as there are people who would rather push a Ford than drive a Holden there are those who believe that all anti-virus program are the same. This is just not true!

Another recent client had been told some years ago that a particular anti-virus program was the best, so she bought it. I do not remember ever having a high opinion of that particular program, but its sale probably got the salesperson a few brownie points. She had continued to use that program for several years. This was, in my opinion, a mistake because there are now many better programs on the market: some of these are free and some commercial.

MSE, if this result is anything to go by, will not slow your computer down by as much as her previous commercial anti-virus program. If you need an AV program try this one.

Further Information

Microsoft Security Essentials www.microsoft.com/security_essentials