

Radio Days – 2011-06-11

Tip of the Week – Beginners' Simple Programs

During the week I had a call from a client who was frustrated by his accounting program. He had bought the easy (or Lite) version of one of the popular accounting programs and found that it would not do what he both wanted and needed. This is a common problem with all sorts of programs which I have had to fix for over twenty years. The program is always a cheap version of an excellent program and seems designed to get the owner to buy the full version to actually get the job done!

This is what happened with my client. After looking at his program and at his needs I installed the trial version of the full program to see if it did what he wanted. It did, so we upgraded his program to the full version (fortunately at the upgrade price, not the full price) and he was set to continue doing what he wanted to do with his business.

Take Control of Your Learning

I had another client this week who lives outside Bendigo and travelled to Bendigo once a week to have computer lessons with a teacher in a small class of ten students. After a few weeks the class had fallen from ten students to four, and he decided to drop out. His reason for dropping out was, quite simply, that he was not getting what he wanted from the class. The tutor was more interested in recounting his life story than in teaching his students what they wanted.

He rang me and asked me to teach him three things:

- How to use an email program
- How to use the internet
- How to use Facebook

These were simple things, and all required a working internet connection. For some reason his internet connection was not working so fixing that problem was the first thing. Once that had been done the next step was to install an email program and create his account. There were a number of emails to be answered so there was another exercise for my student. During all this time the small matters which hurt every newcomer to computing surfaced. These small matters are things like:

- How to see the screen and all the items on it
- How to minimise, maximise, restore and close a window
- How to hold the mouse
- How to use the mouse (left & right click, middle click and scroll)
- How to drag items around on the screen

Before we knew it three hours had passed and lots had been achieved. My best moment was when he said that he had learnt more in these three hours than in eight hours of class.

How is your learning going?

Further Information

Nothing this week