



Coffee and Computers Newsletter



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My Call to Microsoft

You know that I have been fed up with my computer hanging up all the time.

For those of you who haven't heard me complain, it all started when I downloaded Internet Explorer version 6.0. I had been telling everyone not to do this, but a neighbor came over and wanted to know how to do it. So I downloaded it from Microsoft's web site.

As soon as it installed itself, my computer started to lock up after almost any operation. It didn't care if I was on the Internet or just using an application program. The mouse would stop mousing and I would have to "hard" reboot by pushing the reboot button on the machine. A real pain.

The other night I got so fed up that I called Microsoft Technical Support on the telephone. Since it was a toll number, 425.635.7222, I used my cellular telephone (free 300 minutes per month) and spoke with three people for 37 minutes.

Nathan, the last person, was the Windows 98 expert and admitted that IE 6.0 was causing problems.

He had a fix, which is what I want to share.

He asked if I was using a virus protection program. I use McAfee Clinic, the on-line version of McAfee's program.

He told me to uninstall it. This I did by going to McAfee in the Program menu and finding their uninstall program.

Then he told me to go to Control Panel > Add/Remove Programs and highlight Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0, then click on Remove. When I did this another window appeared. In this window I was told to select "Repair Internet Explorer." I did and clicked OK.

This repair program evidently did its magic and I have been using the computer ever since with no hang ups.

This morning I went to the Internet and reinstalled the McAfee virus program. I am a subscriber to their "Clinic" and can do all this on-line. So far, all seems to be working.

The moral to this story is to be sure to turn off your virus protection program before installing any new software. I

thought I did before I downloaded IE 6.0, but may not have.

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Second subject:

Recently I downloaded a "Critical Update" for Microsoft Windows 98. Apparently one of the things it updated was the email program, Outlook Express. Now I get a message that OE has intercepted an attachment that may be unsafe. It also removes the attachment line so that the attachment cannot be opened.

After searching through the Options under Tools in Outlook Express, I found an entry under Security that said, "do not allow attachments to be saved or opened that potentially could be a virus." I removed the check in front of this statement. I also removed the check in front to "Restricted zone" a couple of lines above.

Now attachments show up as normal and you can choose whether to open them or not.

I think Microsoft is trying to patch the security holes in its programs. I'm not recommending that you remove this feature, just telling you how in case you want to.

By the way, I was pleasantly surprised that I had almost no delay getting through to the Microsoft Technical Support people. It was a toll call, but that's why I use a cellular.

Last bit of trivia:

For those of us that use "AdsGone," the pop-up advertisement removing program (www.AdsGone.com), there's an interesting side effect. While trying to download a Microsoft Critical Update, there is a pop-up window that has the user agreement. You must agree to this agreement before you can download the update.

AdsGone treats this pop-up as an advertisement and rejects it. It pops up on the screen for just a fraction of a second and then disappears. You must disable AdsGone to get to this agreement before proceeding with the download.

It's always something!!!!

See you all at 'Coffee and Computers' Friday mornings at the Senior Center to discuss these and other computer topics.

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