

Sort I.T. Computer Services Newsletter

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Welcome

Spring is just around the corner and after a very enjoyable winter break, it's nice to be back in Central. I hope you are all looking forward to the upcoming Blossom Festival and the warm weather that will follow, hopefully! There is nothing like being away from here to make you realise how fantastic it is to live where we do, my wife and I will never forget how calm and peaceful Queenstown felt when we arrived back after a marathon trip home. The view of the lakes and the drive back to Alexandra made us feel truly thankful of the time, space and scenery of the area.

A warm welcome any new subscribers to this newsletter and don't forget to advise any friends and family to also sign up so that the information and education about computing grows.

Thank you.

Jason John
Sort I.T. Computer Services.

PRINTERS

Printers are a useful bit of technology and as computers have advanced and become everyday objects, so have the printers that we use with them. Nearly everyone owns or uses a printer regularly, and if you have one then you'll know how expensive they can be to run, not just that but the problems and errors can sometimes drive you to insanity. So to help you with your printer we've put together a short list of some printer tips and tricks.

1. You may or may not have heard of drivers depending on how much you know about computers. A driver is basically a piece of software that operates and controls a device that is connected to your computer, in this case a printer. If you have lost the driver disk for your printer and need it to re-install the driver then don't worry, most of the manufacturers have archives of their drivers on their websites, you will probably end up getting a newer version of the driver this way too.
2. On some printers you can print out a test page without even going through your computers print interface. It varies depending on the model, for example on the Photosmart C3180 if you hold down the 'x' button and the colour button then a test page will print. Have a look through your printer's manual and see if your printer has this feature.
3. If you ever have any problems or errors when it comes to printing (in most cases everyone who owns a printer has had some sort of problem at some stage), then try

rebooting both your printer and computer, check all the wires that connect your PC and printer and provide them with power are plugged in correctly and if all else fails then update/re-install your driver.

4. Ink can sometimes dry up and cause small blockages within the print-heads nozzles, this can lead to your prints being streaky and faded. If this happens to you, you can buy cleaning cartridges that will clean the print-heads within an inkjet printer, they will break up and remove any ink that has dried inside the nozzles within the print-head.
5. Web sites, emails and other documents often have ads and other clutter that you generally don't want to print. If you look carefully on a website you'll usually find a "Print-Friendly" version of the page which will remove the unwanted adverts. Alternatively, PrintFriendly.com allows you to make any web page or document print friendly by getting rid of the unneeded clutter.
6. When buying a new printer, always check the ink cartridge prices before you buy. It is common to buy a printer that is extremely cheap only to find out that the ink costs more than the printer did. It is this razor and blade style business model that a lot of the printer manufacturers use to make their money (they sell the main product for very little and make up the money in the consumables), it's a clever business model, but it drives the customers insane.
7. If you can buy re-manufactured ink cartridges or can get them re-filled professionally then do so. Re-manufactured/re-filled/compatible cartridges do not void the printers warranty and as long as you check for reviews of the company you are buying from first then you should get similar or the same print quality for a lot less. Personally, I would recommend buying the approved manufacturers, as most refill cartridges can cause more harm than good.
8. If you have a laser jet printer, and your toner cartridge is beginning to show signs of running out (streaks and lighter print outs), take out your toner cartridge and shake it lightly, the same way you probably had when first inserting your cartridge. This should redistribute the toner dust that is left inside and will hopefully let you print out a few more pages before it totally runs out.
9. If you are wanting to save money, then try changing to the print quality to 'draft' or 'grey-scale' in your printer settings to save ink and print double-sided (also called duplex printing) if your printer allows it, to save paper.
10. If your ink cartridge dries up and as a result isn't printing well then try dipping the print-head on the cartridge (this only applies to the cartridges that come with the print-head built-in) into some warm/hot water for a few seconds, this should break up the dried ink. After doing so dab the print-head on some tissue paper, if you get a solid line of ink then dry the cartridge off and place it back in the printer.
11. If your printer tells you, you are running low on ink, but you still are getting good quality prints with no streaks or fading, then carry on printing as you will probably still get a few more pages from it. The estimation of how many pages your cartridge will print is just that, an estimation, more than often you will get more prints that it says.

SPRING RECAP

Here are some the things that are important to remember, but easy to forget with you computers.

1. Virus Protection – Free anti-virus software can effectively protect your computer. Microsoft Security Essentials, Avast and AVG are all recommended, but the best protection is you, a virus can still get through if you let it.
2. Backups – There are some serious “Ransom-ware” viruses around at the moment. They can encrypt your files and the only way to remove them is to pay and hope that they will be released. If you regularly backup your important files and documents, you can avoid having to pay to get back your important data and restore your virus free backups.
3. Windows XP – This has now been un-supported since April 2014, it is recommended that anyone using Windows XP upgrade their PC to avoid any ‘complications’ that may arise.

PC Tips

Current web browsers are designed to allow you to view multiple websites within one window. We have compiled a small list of the most commonly used shortcuts that you might not already know about:

Ctrl+T - Open a new browsing tab

Ctrl+Shift+T - Closed a browser tab by accident? No problems, this will bring it back

Ctrl+Tab - Switch between your open tabs

Ctrl+Click - Click on a link to open in a new tab

If you would like additional information or have any other questions, please contact us at contact@sortitcomputers.com.