

the newsletter of Tarragon Solutions

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Does your PC seem to be running slowly? Try a Spring Clean!

As spring moves into summer, albeit with some unseasonable (i.e. hot) weather, it's not too late to think about giving your PCs a spring clean.

When you bought and installed your computer, you probably felt impressed and relieved about the speed with which applications loaded and ran, the near instantaneous switch between programs or documents.

Time has passed and you're now certain that your "new" PC is now running even slower than your old one did. Possibly this is true, because all PCs suffer from an aging process of sorts – an accumulation of unwanted and unneeded files, programs and Registry entries, hard disk space fragmentation and burgeoning start-up lists.

One solution definitely is to replace the PC with a new one, where everything is clean and well-ordered with nothing to slow it down. However, replacing your PC might not be an option, especially in these financially constrained times, so why not consider a **Tarragon Spring Clean** instead?

Either in your office or ours (your choice), we'll analyse your computer and report on the programs installed, uninstall those programs you *really* don't need and clean up the Windows Registry to remove the accumulated clutter. We'll reorganise your start-up lists and your hard drive and, in the spirit of a real spring clean, we'll physically clean the PC's insides to remove all the dust, fluff and fragments of crisps.

The cost is just £80+vat per computer (annually supported clients may have their support time adjusted by the time taken instead if required). However, if you don't see a noticeable difference in start up and program performance (in which case, maybe it is time to buy a new computer!), we won't charge for the spring clean.

Go on, be kind to your computer - and give it a chance to reward you with improved performance!



The word from Microsoft - don't move to Vista!

Most people have been saying it for several years but now Microsoft have come out and advised companies that if they haven't yet migrated to Windows Vista then don't bother. Bill Veghte, Microsoft's senior vice president for Windows business, said in a recent speech that users should stop testing Vista and switch to testing Windows 7 instead.

Windows 7, which has been almost universally well received, has been confirmed to be released on October 22nd though the "Release Candidate" - likely to be the code that is finally shipped - has been available for anyone to download and test since early in May.



UK Software Piracy “Costs £1.49bn”

According to a recent study sponsored by the Business Software Alliance, over 27% of all desktop software installed in the UK is unlicensed. With the great majority of this being business-oriented software, the loss to the economy is put at around £1.49billion.

The BSA represents the interests of software manufacturers including Microsoft, IBM and Apple so it probably is not an entirely unbiased study – but even allowing for that the figures are horrifying. But the UK isn't alone, or even near the top of the list of 'worst offenders'. Globally, around 40% of software is pirated at an estimated cost of \$53billion with countries such as China and Brazil amongst the worst. At the other end of the scale is the US with 'just' 20% illegal software – but, given the size of the US software market, even that is worth over \$9billion.

There tends to be a 'so what?' attitude towards software piracy but the BSA, together with the Federation Against Software Theft (FAST), are stepping up their efforts to fight unlicensed software. So far in 2009, the value of legal settlements achieved by the BSA on behalf of its members has increased by 25 times on the same period last year.

As a last resort, companies that use pirated software – or too many copies of licensed software – can be prosecuted in court. Directors can face fines of up to £5000 in a Magistrates' Court and/or 6 months in prison, and in the Crown Court unlimited fines and/or up to 10 years in prison.

Clearly, it is worth ensuring your software is legal. If you'd like help in establishing an inventory of software installed on your PCs, the first step in managing your licences, please get in touch.

Tip of the Month - Reporting Error Box Information

From time to time, errors occur in Windows and Microsoft Office which result in a dialog box being displayed. All support technicians will request the information displayed in the error dialog box but some companies (not us!) don't like being sent a screen shot.

To save the tedium of transcribing the error text, as used to be the only alternative, most Office and many Windows error dialogs now permit Copy to be used, thus allowing the full and accurate text to be pasted into your email or report. You don't even need to select the text in the box; just ensure it is the 'active' window and use Ctrl+C!

After pasting into your email, please check that the dialog box title is included with the text as this can greatly assist analysis!

and finally... the downside of Spring Cleaning!

An AT&T office worker in San Jose, California, decided to clean out a fridge that had been left full of rotten food. She emptied the contents into a conference room then used a couple of cleaning chemicals to scrub the fridge.

Unfortunately, the combination of the rotten food and the chemicals caused 28 people to need treatment for nausea and vomiting – seven of them requiring hospital treatment - and the office building was evacuated.

Apparently the enthusiastic worker who cleaned out the fridge wasn't affected – she suffers from allergies and couldn't smell a thing!



a typical office fridge

Please let us know what you think of [Solutions!](#) - email solutions@tarragon.co.uk