

Printer Headaches?

It's your worst night mare, it's midnight, you're just about finished with the presentation that you need to give to the office staff the next morning, all you have to do is print it out and go to bed. Oh no not now! An error message popped up telling you that there was an error printing to the printer. What do you do? Kick the printer or the computer?

Well actually don't kick either one, I have found that it doesn't do the equipment any good and I've never seen an instance where it has changed the equipment's mind. When a customer calls me with a question I immediately start getting the facts together and go into trouble shooting mode. You can do the same thing.

In our example with the printer problem, first, look at the printer; are there any error indicator lights on? Check your user manual, practically all printers come with diagnostic information to help you determine what is wrong with the printer. Sometimes the diagnostic feature will include a flashing light, or an actual error code. If the diagnostic mode on your printer is not helping another quick test would be to print a test page. Most printers allow you to print a test page by holding down a button or two while powering the printer on. If a test page prints OK using this method then your printer is probably in good shape. Whatever the problem, the manual that came with your printer should be able to help diagnose your printers' problem.

If however your printer checks out OK then the next thing to take a look at is the printers software on your computer. Start off by double clicking on the printer icon in the control panel. Then right click on the printers' icon you're having the problem with. Click on the properties tab of the menu that just popped up. Click the button at the bottom of the window that says "Print Test Page." Is a test page printing? If so then you're probably having a problem with the application software that you're using. Try to re-install that application or go through the trouble shooting section under the HELP tab.

If a test page does not print then the failure is probably in the printer drivers. Printer drivers are software that is loaded into the Windows operating system when the printer is first installed on the computer. I would click on the ADD/REMOVE PROGRAM icon in the control panel and find the software for your printer. Remove that software by highlighting the program and then clicking on the ADD/REMOVE button at the bottom of the page. Restart the system and then re-install the printers' software according to the manufacturer's installation instructions. If this still does not fix the problem then you probably need to bring your printer and computer to your computer technician to have them straighten out the problem.

One other bit of advice, if the error message says "No Connection To Printer" or something like that, it does not indicate that your printer cable is bad. In fact, printer cables hardly ever go bad. This is just a generic message letting you know that your printers' software is having a problem.

If you don't have a computer technician to take care of your computer problems, then I invite you to visit with Thomas, Roger, or our newest technician, Justin at the Computer Depot. Stop by and see us at 6545 Clinton Hwy across from the Chick-fil-A or give us a call at 947-0749 and we would be happy to answer any question you have.