

## Tech Support

Many of you have probably already noticed that your tech support needs have been higher over the past month or so. If not, I'm sure your need for tech support will increase in the next few months. Vista is due for release at the end of January. However, Microsoft has already been trying out some of the upgraded programs found in Vista on your computer and you might not have even realized it!

Automatic updates are a feature that is normally turned on in Windows XP. This feature allows your computer to automatically download patches and updated programs to your computer. Internet Explorer 7 (IE7) is a program that Microsoft recently added as an automatic download. So, if you turned your computer on one morning and discovered that the Internet suddenly looks different then your computer may have automatically downloaded this update. The same might be true if you turned your computer on one morning and you could not get connected to the Internet at all!

My point is that upgrades don't always go as planned. We have seen an increase in tech support calls because many people downloaded IE7 with negative results. So who's to blame? I like to blame Microsoft, but honestly, they are trying to provide you with a better more secure product. The truth is whenever you attempt to upgrade a program there is always a risk that the outcome will be less than desirable.

Why? The reason is that there are too many unknowns during any typical upgrade. For example, purchase two identical computer systems, (brand, model, etc.), and give them to two different people. I can guarantee that after 30 days the systems will be different. Sure, the make and model of the computer is still the same but the software found on the computers will be completely different. One user may use their computer for downloading music and IM'ing friends. The other user might use their computer for playing online games and sharing pictures with friends. There is a strong possibility that downloading IE7 on these two computers could actually yield different results. One system may perform flawlessly and the other may become unstable or even stop connecting to the Internet all together.

The point I want to make is that upgrades don't always go as planned and you should always be prepared for the worst-case scenario. Here are a couple of tips to consider before attempting an upgrade. Do you really need this particular upgrade? Be sure to weigh the pros and cons. Is this upgrade worth the expense and time it takes to perform the upgrade? Backup your data! This is an activity that needs to be performed on a regular basis anyway, but you should make a real effort to backup any important data prior to any upgrade. Lastly, set aside plenty of time. Don't even think about upgrading anything if you have a big report due the next morning. A simple 30-minute upgrade can easily turn into an 8-hour ordeal if things go wrong.

The Computer Depot has been in business for 10 years and is experts when it comes to upgrading computers. Give us a call the next time your computer has a problem. Our upfront pricing guarantees that you won't be surprised when it's time to pay the bill. Call 947-0749 and talk to Thomas, Roger or Aaron. Happy New Year!!!