



INFO-TEK

The Computer Guys

a Kansas City Computer Consulting Firm

Technology Tips and News for Busy Professionals

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Greetings!

Volume 1, Number 5

We hope you enjoy and benefit from these technology tips and news for busy professionals.

INFO-TEK employs a full time staff of trained and certified computer experts who are quick to respond, easy to talk with and people you can trust.

We specialize in small business and home office clients and we have helped thousands of people in the greater Kansas City area with their computer service needs at very competitive and affordable rates.

→ [Protect Your PC With a Hard-Drive Password](#)

A user-account password is important for security, but it's useless if your PC is lost or stolen; a thief could just install your hard drive in another PC instead of trying to boot it up under your name. To block access, add a password to the hard disk. This is even more important for laptops since you can take them with you.

This process is simpler than encrypting the hard disk, but it can't match encryption's level of security. (Encryption scrambles data so that even if a thief gains access, he probably can't make sense of it.) Think of this action as adding another strong lock.

When prompted at boot, press the key to enter your PC's BIOS. Find the location to set the HDD password and enter the secure password you want to use. Be sure to write down this password and keep it in a safe location – *This doesn't mean on a sticky note stuck to your*

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monitor. ☺ -- If you lose the password, recovering the data could cost a lot of money.

Follow the on-screen commands to exit and save your changes. Now whenever you start the PC, you'll see a prompt to enter the HDD Password first. If you want to remove the password later, return to the BIOS. Revisit the HDD Password setting, enter the current password, and leave the new-password field blank.

Call us today so we can help you with this process and if your PC doesn't support this function, ask us how we can add encryption to your important data.

➔ Make Windows (XP or Vista) Run Faster

When you launch a program, does it snap open in a matter of seconds, or does it leave you drumming your fingers for what seems like an eternity? Countless possible culprits can be to blame for a slow system, but you have a good chance of revving things up by following a few simple steps.

Start with a RAM boost. A Windows XP system can get by on 512MB, but it'll run a lot smoother with 1GB. As for Vista, it needs at least 2GB for optimal performance. Vista also benefits if you disable resource-hogging (and, some would say, unnecessary) extras, like Aero Glass and Flip3D. To free your system from both, right-click anywhere on the Desktop and click Personalize. Next, click Windows Color and Appearance, open Classic appearance properties for more color options, and then set the color scheme to Windows Vista Basic. Click OK and your system should seem a bit zippier.

XP users should consider disabling Windows' indexing service, a system hog of little practical value. Go to Control Panel, Administrative Tools, Services, and scroll down to Indexing Service. Double-click it, and set Startup type to Disabled.

If these configuration changes don't have an impact on the

performance of your PC, then increasing your RAM should. Call us today to schedule an on-site service call to determine if a RAM boost will speed up your PC or if the sluggishness is caused by a bigger problem like a faulty hard-drive or malicious software running behind the scenes.

Open .DOCX Files Even if You Don't Have Office 2007

Another version of Microsoft Office, another set of file-compatibility hassles. (No, really, thanks a ton, Microsoft.) Office 2007 brought with it the DOCX format, which can't easily be opened by anyone who doesn't also have Office 2007.

Option #1: Install the succinctly named Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for 2007 Office Word, Excel, and PowerPoint File Format. It enables older versions of Office to open Office 2007 documents, and it does all the necessary conversion behind the scenes: no input required from you. (Just make sure you've installed the latest service pack for your version of Office, otherwise the Compatibility Pack won't work.)

Option #2: If you're a Firefox user, install the OpenXML Viewer extension, which lets you open Word 2007 files right in your browser with all the formatting and layout preserved. You can't edit the document, but at least you'll be able to view it.

Option #3: Upload the file to DOCX Converter. In short order you'll receive an e-mail with a link to your converted version of the file.

INFO-TEK recommends Option #1 and in a very short time, we can install the Compatibility Pack on your computer(s). Call us today for an on-site visit.

Rule of Thumb

Never leave your valuables in a spot where it makes them venerable. If you use an external media device (external hard-drives, flash drives, etc.) to back up your important data, never leave them on a shelf next to your computer equipment. If something happens to your computer (i.e. theft, fire, natural disaster), the same thing will likely happen to your backup. Treat your backups like valuable jewels... Keep them safe!

When you need help with your computers or computer network, I'm hopeful that you will consider calling INFO-TEK at: 816-914-8826.

Go to the “Specials” section of our [website](#) to receive a 20% Off Coupon for your next On-Site Service Call.

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Sincerely,

Brian Greenstreet
INFO-TEK