

## Rich's Ramblings for September 2005

### **A short ramble about my pet peeves and computers.**

I hate waiting for all my startup programs to check for updates. My anti-virus has to check for updates and then download them. Sometimes the machine has to be rebooted because the update changes some critical files. Meanwhile my anti-spyware program does the same. And on top of that Windows is checking for security updates and then it has to pop up and tell me that there are critical updates. For some people this is fine and probably the best solution, at least they should not end up being a robot when their computer gets compromised and messes up the internet for the rest of us.

If everyone was really conscientious about checking each day for updates to their system, anti-virus and adware type programs, the world (internet) would be a lot better. But you have to do this on a regular basis. Sometimes I have had 3 or 4 programs all requiring updates and some requiring a reboot. This sure gets frustrating. I sometimes feel that I spend over 20% of my computer time check for program updates.

Enough... It is a necessary evil if we are going to use these infernal machines..

I have a lot of empathy for those of you with dial-up connections. And if you're a macintosh user, it can get worse. My mac-mini has had at least 3 huge updates in the past 2 months and each was in the neighborhood of 40 megabytes of updates for the OS and programs. Remembering my days of using a Modem to access the internet and waiting forever for a web page to load, I can understand why users don't download all the updates to their programs and operating systems. I recommend you form a buddy liaison with someone who has a broad band connection and have them download the updates and put them on CD-ROM for you. Or at least offer to let you bring your machine to their place and update over their high bandwidth connection. Once you see how fast and easy the broad band works, you might be tempted to go for the cheapie DSL or cable.

I just returned from a real long weekend in San Diego California where I attended the South West computer conference. Great show and really well run. They are so organized and the vendors put on some great presentations. While I was in San Diego, I was able to visit with the GoldenBow people, they make my favorite disk optimizer program VOPT. (<http://www.vopt.com>) It was an enjoyable long weekend and the weather in San Diego was great. All in all, I had a nice vacation from the high humidity of the DC metropolitan area.

I have had Fiber Optic internet access for a few months now and I have not had any

glitches. I pay for the 15/2 option and it sure is a dream downloading all the beta versions of products that I am testing. Some of them run 360Megabytes or larger and it really screams on the downloads. Of course having a high speed connection is worthless if the other end does not have a high speed access. Microsoft and the other big boys do but some of the smaller companies use a slow speed line and that is where the choke point is on file transfers. There are several places on the internet where you can check the speed of your internet connection. I have some links on my web page ( <http://cpcug.org/user/schinnel> ) where you can go to and check your speed.

I find that more and more of the programs that I use are getting more bloated than ever. I used to recommend Symantec's Norton Anti-Virus up to version 2003, now they are touting their all-in-one products and they seem to want to completely take over your computer. Pretty soon 1 gigabyte of memory will be the minimum for new systems. And then a 200 gigabyte hard disk will be the norm.

I have been using ubuntu Linux and it has progressed very well on it's way to being a windows replacement. It still has a long way to go as it is not very intuitive to upgrade programs or check for system upgrades. I am about ready to try the "lindows" alternative which is now named Linspire. The producers are giving me a free copy to try so I guess that will get me started. I just can't wait for another OS. <GGGG> (that's a big grin)

Well, that's about all for this month, so those of you with a disagreement with my columns are more than welcome to write your own. The Monitor editor will be very pleased and your columns will be appreciated..

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