

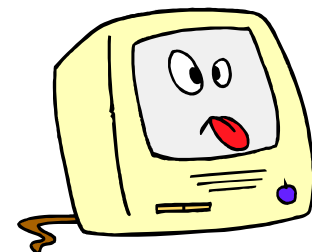
THE HAWK I VIEW



Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc.

What's
Inside

5 Cheap Ways To Bring Old Computers Up To Speed



Want to improve the speed and performance of your current network without purchasing new systems? Don't despair! There are ways you can get more life out of your current computer network without investing serious cash into new machines for every employee.

**5 Cheap
Ways To
Bring Old
Computers
Up To
Speed**

#1. Add Memory. One of the most inexpensive and effective ways to improve a computer's performance is to install more RAM (random access memory). This is especially true if you are running newer applications that are soaking up your system's resources. Adding RAM will speed up the applications installed on your computer and allow you to open and run more programs simultaneously.

#2. Upgrade The Processor Or Add A Graphics Accelerator. If you are just looking for a little more "zoom," upgrading the processor or installing a graphics accelerator will give your computer the ability to process information faster and improve its overall speed.

In addition, the growing popularity of graphical and multi-media applications means that graphics accelerators have become more of a necessity rather than an enhancement. Most computer manufacturers now bundle a graphics accelerator with their mid-range and high-end systems, but if your machine is old, you may benefit from installing one.

#3. Perform Regular Maintenance. Computers, like cars, need regular maintenance to perform at top speed and reliability. At a minimum, you should run ScanDisk and the Disk Defrag Utility on your machines once a month. ScanDisk will scan for and repair problems on your hard drive. After running ScanDisk, run the Disk Defragmenter utility to reorganize your hard drive. This will make your applications and files load and run faster. Make sure you run these two utilities on both the server and desktop machines.

#4. Remove Spyware. One telltale sign that your computer is infected with spyware is slow, unstable performance. Spyware sucks up your system's resources to carry out its evil intent, slowing down your computer and even causing it to freeze and crash. I recommend using spyware cleaning software at least once a week to make sure your computer network stays clean.

#5. Disable Or Remove Unnecessary Programs Running In The Background. Many computers have pre-installed software programs that automatically start and run in the background. These programs take up system resources and slow down speed and performance of your computer.

While these recommendations will certainly speed up your system, they aren't a miracle cure for a seriously out-of-date computer network. Just because a computer still runs doesn't mean you should keep it around forever. If your machines can no longer handle your daily demands, or if they constantly crash, freeze, or run painfully slow, then it's time to bite the bullet and upgrade your hardware and software. Fortunately, computer prices are constantly dropping and new technologies can dramatically lower your overall IT costs.

Not sure if you can get more life out of your current computer or network? Want to know if it is time to upgrade? Give us a call! We'll be happy to review your network and discuss various options for upgrading on a budget.

**What You
Need To
Know
Before
Going
Wireless**

**Product
Launch
Roadmap
for
Microsoft**

Microsoft's New
Browser

What You Need To Know Before Going Wireless

With the growing availability of standards-based 802.11b wireless network components, wireless networks are becoming a key element of businesses across the world. 802.11b networks enhance existing wired networks by providing convenient access to network resources for workers carrying portable computers and handheld devices (both office and in public facilities such as airports and hotels), and for guests or temporary workers. A wireless network can also provide a cost-effective alternative to relocating physical Ethernet jacks in environments where facilities are moved or changed frequently.

Successful deployment of an 802.11b network in “infrastructure mode” requires careful planning and network design. This process includes determining network applications, coverage requirements, number of users, client device types, and equipment selection. In addition, unlike wired networks, planners must assess environmental obstacles that can impede radio frequency (RF) signal transmissions. This article presents key deployment considerations to keep in mind when planning the wireless network.

The first step in designing a wireless network is to determine the requirements of the network. This includes identifying the areas that need to be covered, the number of users and the types of devices they will use, applications, environment, and so forth. From these requirements, network designers can begin to determine how many Access Point's (AP) are required and where they must be placed. The goal is to ensure adequate RF coverage to stationary and roaming users of the wireless network. A key activity of this design process is to perform a site survey to determine the required coverage; number, density, and location of APs; number of users; and channel selections. In addition, the site survey can identify conditions that inhibit performance through path and multipath loss, as well as RF interference.

Path loss refers to the loss of signal power experienced between the AP and the client system as the distance between the two increases. Path loss is affected by transmission distance; obstacles such as walls, ceilings, and furniture; and the frequency of the transmission. Generally, the higher the frequency of the signal, the shorter the transmission distance that can be achieved.

Multipath loss occurs as an RF signal bounces off objects in the environment such as furniture and walls while in route to its destination. The result is that an RF signal can take more than one path, arriving as multiple signals as its destination. This can impact performance significantly. Correct network design and the

use of APs and client network interface controllers (NICs) with “antenna diversity” help to correct for multipath loss. The principle of antenna diversity is to combine (in additive fashion) two or more relatively uncorrelated signals using several methods. In 802.11b networks, antenna diversity is implemented using two antennas with support circuitry to improve signal reception.

RF interference is caused by other RF sources that also operate in the 2.4GHz frequency band. These sources can include microwave ovens and cordless phones. In addition, emerging Bluetooth personal area network devices operate in this frequency band and can interfere with 802.11 transmissions.



AP placement is typically determined using a combination of theoretical principles and a through site survey. The site survey uses building plans and physical site tours to identify optimal placement of APs. The resulting plan should take into account usage patterns and adverse conditions that can impact performance.

Under good conditions, an AP can provide coverage up to approximately 150 feet (46 meters) indoors. An example of an environment where this distance could be achieved is relatively open environment with high ceilings and no hard-wall offices or other impediments to the RF signal. In this environment, the AP can be placed high to provide an unimpeded signal to the wireless clients. In office environments with walls (including cube walls) and other impediments, a more typical range is 75 to 80 feet (23 to 24 meters).

Once the APs are installed, IT personnel can test the implementation by roaming the premises with a laptop and observing variations in the signal strength. A poor signal or poor throughput at a particular location would be an indication that an adjustment in AP placement, density, or channel selection is required.

Next month in the Hawk I View we will discuss the different security measures to consider when setting up a wireless network. A lot of people just plug in their Access Points, Routers, etc. without even securing the network from the outside world. This in turn allows neighbors, strangers, anyone in the range of the wireless network to connect and log on without you even noticing.

If you are considering your business jumping into the world of the “wireless”, please call Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc. We will design the network, test it, and also make sure all security measures are taken to insure your businesses safety.

Bits N Bytes

The Lighter Side: Good Advice and Observations

If you can't be kind, at least have the courtesy to be vague.

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

The easiest way to find something you've lost is to buy a replacement.

If you can smile when things go wrong, you have someone in mind to blame.

Did you ever notice that when you put the words "the" and "IRS" together, it spells "theirs?"

Bumper Stickers Seen On Cars...

God Made Us Sisters,
Prozac Made Us Friends

If They Don't Have Chocolate In
Heaven, I Ain't Going

My Mother Is A Travel Agent
For Guilt Trips

If You Want Breakfast In Bed,
Sleep In The Kitchen

I Used To Have A Handle On Life,
But It Broke

I'd Love To Hear From YOU!

Is there an article you would like to comment on? Is there a topic you want me to research? Have a funny story or a resource you want to share with the other subscribers? Then send it to me! We are always looking for new and useful content to add to Hawk I View.

Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc.

Michele Antone

(314) 727-1174

michele@hawkisg.com

www.hawkisg.com

(314) 727-1174



Microsoft Product Launch Roadmap for 2005-2006

Microsoft is launching several new products in the next two years. A couple of the products that will affect the small and medium businesses is going to be the upgrade of the operating system Microsoft Server 2003 and an upgrade of the Windows XP operating System.

Windows Server 2003 "R2" (Fourth Quarter 2005)

Microsoft Windows Server 2003 "R2" bridges the gap between the current version of Windows Server 2003 and Longhorn. It consists of windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1, plus "R2" features, which include simplified branch server deployment and management, identity federation, and rights management services.

Windows Client "Longhorn" (Second Half 2006)

Codenamed "Longhorn," the next-generation Windows client operating system is targeted to be available in 2006. The Longhorn client will offer breakthrough advances in operating system basics—providing the most secure, reliable, and high-performance Windows platform ever and delivering significant advancements in deployment, management, and serviceability to improve IT operational efficiency and reduce costs. Longhorn also will offer new end-to-end tools that give people more control over their PC's, help them find and manage information more easily, and help them collaborate with others. In addition, Longhorn will provide important new functionality that enables developers to deliver new applications and experiences rapidly. The new functionality includes the Avalon graphics subsystem and Indigo, which provides a new service-oriented approach to building and running connected systems from the ground up using Web services architecture.

If your company has planned on purchasing new equipment or software; you do not have to wait on the new software/operating systems to be released. There is an option to purchase Software Assurance on top of the software that is purchased today. Software Assurance is an option that allows businesses/individuals to receive upgrades that are released within a 2 year time period of the original purchase date. If there are any questions please contact our office.



Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc.

Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc.
6439 Plymouth, Suite 112
St. Louis, MO 63133

Phone: (314) 727-1174
Fax: (636) 230-9905
www.hawkisg.com

We Make Your
Computer
Soar!

Services We Offer

- PC repair and troubleshooting
- Printer repair and troubleshooting
- Disaster recovery
- System back ups & data protection
- Virus protection & removal
- Network security
- E-mail & Internet setup help
- Wireless networking
- Consulting & support
- One-on-one computer training
- Hardware Sales

ATTENTION SMALL BUSINESSES:

Get all of the computer support you need without the expense of hiring a full time IT staff. Ask about our Small Business Computer Support Program.



Microsoft's New Browser

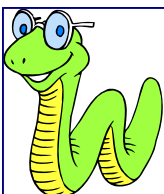


Microsoft Internet Explorer browser is showing signs of aging. Other than some security improvements and the pop-up blocker, the browser is in need of a make-over in order to compete with it's rivals.

Microsoft is preparing IE 7, a major update that plays catch-up with newer IE browsers for the Windows operating system, including Opera Software ASA's Opera and the Mozilla Foundation's Firefox.

Beta 1, the early version of IE 7, was released mainly for software developers to test for compatibility. Beta 2, will come out with more planned features and is expected later this year. Here is what to expect:

- Tabbed Browsing—this allows you to open several Web pages without cluttering the computer desktop with separate windows.
- Search Box
- Shrink-to-Fit Print—this will make the entire page smaller so the site fits across the width of the paper. The browser will also not allow a second page to be printed when only one or two lines remain.
- RSS—Really Simple Syndication, a technology for notifying users of new entries on their favorite news sites and Web Journals.
- Real-Time Anti-Phishing Tool—this was built in to address scammers who try to trick people into revealing passwords by posing as legitimate banking or e-commerce sites. When IE 7 encounters an unfamiliar site, it gives users the option of passing that address to Microsoft to check against a database of phishing sites. If there is a match, IE 7 takes the user to a “red” warning page. Even when there isn't a match, IE 7 will display a pop-up “yellow” warning that it sees telltale signs of phishing.
- Web-Site Requests—in previous versions, there were several sections of the code that handle a Web request, whether it comes from typing the address, clicking on a link or using the “File Open” menu function, which means that there are several sections where problems can occur. The code was rewritten in IE 7 to consolidate all that into one entry point, a move that also lays the foundation for future recognition of non-English domain names.



Warning:

On August 18th, 2005 the St. Louis Post-Dispatch released an article, [Latest spate of worms requires vigilance](#). This article describes the new variants of a computer worm that exploits a vulnerability in Microsoft Corporation's Windows 2000 operating system. This particular worm did not seem to be as big a threat as the huge Blaster eruption in 2003, which brought millions of PCs to a crawl. It's an indication that many of the computer users are listening to the warnings and installing/downloading the security patches as quickly as they are released. It also indicates that Microsoft's efforts to crack down on security issues is paying off as well.