Computer Tips

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Simple File Maintenance

Emptying the recycle bin, running disk defragmenter, emptying cookies and temporary internet files, cleaning temporary files, checking the startup menu — does all this seem scrambled dutch to you?

In this article we will give several pointers for optimal file maintenance, both to organize what you want to keep, and safely remove what you don't want.

In our business, the most frequent job we do for our customers is to remove accumulated temporary files.

Temporary files are files created during a program installation, printing, scanning, or Internet download. Over time, these files accumulate and can slow down and even interrupt the regular operation of your computer. Below are simple steps to find and remove these accumulated files.

Temporary files are stored in 3 places on your hard drive. Where these TEMP folders are located depends on your version of Windows. Windows XP and 2000 store them under Documents and Settings - Your Profile Name - Local Settings. Windows 95, 98, and ME store the TEMP folder under the main Windows folder. Double click each folder to navigate to the folders underneath.

Temporary files are any files or folders in the TEMP folder with TMP anywhere in the name, or the symbols ~ and _ in front of the name. These files are safe to delete. Usually there are hundreds of these files in the folder. Leave any other file or folder there. After you have removed all TMP files from the TEMP folder, be sure to empty them from your Recycle Bin.

In addition to your TEMP files, Temporary Internet Files are those files downloaded when you are looking at web pages on the Internet. These also accumulate, and are easy to remove. The method of removal is the same for all versions of Windows. Open up your Internet browser, click on the Tools menu, then Options. In the window that shows, you will see Temporary Internet Files. Click the Delete Files, and this will remove all your Temporary Internet Files.

While there, you might like to click Delete Cookies. Depending on your version of Internet Explorer, you may not see the Delete Cookies button. If you don't see it, we highly recommend that you upgrade your browser to at least version 5.5. This way, you can easily remove your cookies also.

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In our next column, we will give you tips for optimal organizing of your data, and ways to keep your hard drive running smoothly.

For more information on organizing or clearing out your files, you can call us on 4171 0981 during business hours, or email us at info@mcsit.com.au, or visit our website at www.mcsit.com.au. We are happy to help you.