

Computer Tips

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Simple File Maintenance—2

In our last column, we finished with mentioning tips for clearing out the temporary internet files that accumulate over time. In this article we will give more tips on organizing your files for best operation of your PC.

An important thing to remember when organizing your files, is to keep all documents, photos, music & movies under the My Documents folder. We notice some customers keep these files in the main C: drive folder, known as the root folder. This is not a good practice, as this folder is limited in size, and needs all its space to operate your Windows efficiently.

On this point, in the root folder is a file called pagefile.sys. On most PC's this file is kept hidden, for it performs a very important function in Windows. In your computer is a piece of hardware called Random Access Memory, or RAM, and this is the working memory for your operating system, programs, software, etc. However, should your computer require more working memory than what you have installed, your computer will use a section of your hard drive as memory. This function, known as virtual memory allocating, is controlled by the pagefile.sys file. As you can see, if your root folder has more than the essential files in it, your PC will not run efficiently, and even develop problems due to overcrowding of the root folder.

Another simple task in optimizing your files, is to archive your emails. Over time, your email folders become quite large, and this can slow down and even prevent you from using your email program. Most email programs will automatically compact your email folders, but Microsoft Outlook requires even more than this.

Due to its programming, Microsoft Outlook stores all emails, contacts, schedule lists, etc in a single PST file. If this PST file reaches 2GB in size, Outlook will stop working, and complain that it has no more room to accept emails. This is where you need to perform archiving maintenance.

To do this, open up your Outlook program, and right click on your Inbox folder. Click Properties, and then click the AutoArchive tab. Click on "Archive this folder using these settings", and select the age of your emails at which you want the program to archive from (usually 6 months). Leave the setting to move old items to the default archive folder, and click OK. Repeat this process for each of your email folders (Sent Items, any custom folders, etc).

Now go to Tools, Options, and click Other. Click AutoArchive, and check the first setting "Run AutoArchive every 14 days". You might like to change this setting to every day, if you receive a lot of emails. If not, every 14 days is sufficient. Leave all the other settings as is, and click OK to save and exit.

In case you are wondering, this archiving process does not delete any emails. It simply moves any emails older than 6 months to another PST file, and reduces the size of the main PST file.

If you require any assistance with your PC, you can call us on 4171 0981, or email us at info@mcsit.com.au



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85 Chester Street, Nanango (cnr Deakin Crescent)