Using Disk Defragmenter

Disk Defragmenter is a program built into all versions of Windows. This program scans the file structure of your hard drive, looking for gaps that might have occurred. Disk Defragmenter (DD) then takes files from the end of your hard drive to fill any gaps it finds. This keeps all the file structures together, and shortens the time needed for the hard drive to find the file you want.

However, to do this operation, DD needs exclusive access to your hard drive. This means you should not work on your computer, or have other software programs running while DD is operating.

In keeping with this requirement, there are several things you should do before running DD. This applies only for the older versions of Windows, such as 95, 98, and ME. Windows 2000 and XP use a different file structure, and doesn't require the same treatment while using DD.

Before running DD on Windows 95, 98, or ME, always turn off your screensaver. If you don't, DD is interrupted, and will return an error saying, This program has restarted 10 times, and will now close. To turn off your screensaver, right click on your Desktop, click Properties, then Screensaver. Then in the selections on the left, choose None. Then click OK to return to your desktop.

DD will also be interrupted if you leave any Antivirus or firewall programs running. In fact, ANY software, if left running, will interrupt DD. To avoid this, we recommend the following for users of Windows 95, 98, and ME: At the desktop, press CTRL - ALT-DEL on your keyboard all at once. This opens a Program window, which shows all the software that is currently running on your PC. One at a time, highlight each software name with your mouse, and click End Task. The software may take a minute or two to disappear. If another window appears, click the End Task in that window as well. Repeat this process until all software entries are removed, EXCEPT Systray and Explorer. It is VERY important that you leave these two, for if you remove them, your computer will shut down.

Once you have all except Systray and Explorer closed, you can open DD, and it should run without problem. Once it has done its job, which, depending on the size of your hard drive might take several hours, you can restart your PC. All the software you closed previously will reappear, and your hard drive will be faster and more efficient.

For Windows 2000 and XP users, simply go to DD, and run it. You will find DD under Start, Programs (All Programs), Accessories, System Tools. The Windows 2000 and XP version of DD will first analyze your hard drive, and then defragment it. When DD is complete, you will not need to restart your PC.

Running DD regularly, we recommend every month, will improve the overall speed of your PC, and help prevent hard drive problems arising.

If you have any questions or problems running Disk Defragmenter, call us on 4171 0981, or email info@mcsyarraman.com.au.